

## Samaritan's Purse helping northern Alberta flood victims

*Christian relief agency has deployed specially equipped tractor-trailers in Fort McMurray and Fort Vermilion, begins recruiting volunteers to clean out damaged homes*

**CALGARY, AB – May 4, 2020** — Samaritan's Purse Canada is helping flood victims in the northern Alberta communities of Fort McMurray and Fort Vermilion by sending its specially equipped Disaster Relief Units to the water-logged areas, and recruiting volunteers to clean up damaged homes.

Massive ice jams caused the Peace and Athabasca rivers to spill their banks. As a result, hundreds of homes have been damaged in the two areas and thousands of residents evacuated.

"I can't imagine how traumatic this must be for both communities," said Brent Davis, Samaritan's Purse's Canadian ministries project director. Samaritan's Purse was invited to provide assistance by the regional municipality of Wood Buffalo, which includes Fort McMurray, and the county of Mackenzie, which includes Fort Vermilion.

While both areas are dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, residents in Fort McMurray are also grappling with the economic challenges caused by low oil prices. In addition, many residents have not fully recovered from the 2016 wildfire that destroyed more than 2,000 buildings, most of them homes.

Samaritan's Purse spent several years helping Fort McMurray homeowners after the wildfire, and "we're ready to do all we can to help the people there and in Fort Vermilion recover from these floods," Davis said. "We're on the ground, connecting with churches and other community partners as we provide compassionate, coordinated assistance."

Anyone needing Samaritan's Purse clean-up assistance can call **1-833-738-7743** (in Fort McMurray) or **1-866-628-6565** (in the Fort Vermilion area).

Disaster Relief Units are tractor-trailers outfitted with disaster recovery equipment including generators, pumps, hand tools, and safety gear—plus equipment to safeguard from COVID-19—for volunteers. They also serve as volunteer coordination centers, and are equipped with a self-contained office, communications system, and other supplies. We are also sending disaster response teams with each unit.

Besides the two Calgary-based units, Samaritan's Purse has two Disaster Relief Units stationed in southern Ontario to respond to disasters in central and eastern Canada.

In recent years, Samaritan's Purse has assisted victims of a wide variety of Canadian and international natural disasters including flooding in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, plus tornadoes in Ontario, and forest fires in British Columbia and Alberta.

Samaritan's Purse's "sister" organization, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association of Canada, often helps by providing crisis-trained chaplains to comfort and pray with disaster victims and volunteers. Billy Graham Rapid Response Team chaplains are in Fort McMurray and Fort Vermilion to work alongside Samaritan's Purse volunteers.

Please visit [SamaritansPurse.ca/ABfloods](https://SamaritansPurse.ca/ABfloods) for more information on this disaster response.

### Donations Needed

To support Samaritan's Purse's disaster relief efforts, please visit [SamaritansPurse.ca](https://SamaritansPurse.ca) (click on "Donate") or call **1-800-663-6500**.

### About Samaritan's Purse Canada

Samaritan's Purse is a Christian relief and development organization that takes its name from Jesus Christ's biblical story of the Good Samaritan. Like that Good Samaritan, who found a beaten man and helped restore him, we aid victims of war, disease, disaster, poverty, famine, and persecution. Besides disaster relief, our work includes collecting and distributing gift-filled Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes, providing safe water, teaching vocational skills, and providing agricultural supplies and training to families in the developing world. Learn more at [SamaritansPurse.ca](http://SamaritansPurse.ca).

**Media Inquiries:**

Frank King, news media relations manager  
Samaritan's Purse Canada  
403-990-0161 (mobile)  
[fking@samaritan.ca](mailto:fking@samaritan.ca)