

Samaritan's Purse in Texas to help victims of Hurricane Harvey

Canadian volunteers and donations needed to help homeowners recover

CALGARY, AB, Aug. 29, 2017 – Samaritan's Purse has five specially equipped Disaster Relief Units either in Texas or on their way, and is recruiting U.S. and Canadian volunteers to clean up homes in response to the massive destruction caused by Hurricane Harvey. The Category 4 storm slammed into the Texas on Friday, bringing catastrophic flooding, widespread damage and 15 deaths.

Samaritan's Purse has deployed all of its U.S.-based Disaster Relief Unit tractor trailers from its international headquarters in North Carolina, and three more of the specially equipped units based in Canada are preparing to be deployed. The Christian international relief organization's teams are ready to help devastated homeowners as soon as state officials give approval to access damaged communities.

"The people of Texas are facing an unprecedented catastrophe, and they urgently need our help," said Samaritan's Purse President Franklin Graham. "We're going to do all we can to help them by tarping roofs, mudding out homes, and clearing debris. Most importantly, we're going to show them the love of Christ and let them know they're not facing this crisis alone."

Disaster Relief Units are tractor trailers outfitted with disaster recovery equipment including generators, pumps, hand tools, and safety gear for volunteers. They also serve as volunteer coordination and training centers, and are equipped with a self-contained office, communications system, and other supplies.

The Canadian-based Disaster Relief Units are stationed in Alberta, Ontario, and New Brunswick. The Alberta unit has played an integral role in helping Samaritan's Purse staff and volunteers in assisting with flood and wildfire fire clean-up in British Columbia throughout most of the summer.

Also deploying to Texas are crisis-trained Rapid Response Team Chaplains from Samaritan's Purse's sister organization, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA). The chaplains will offer valuable emotional and spiritual support to people who have lost their homes and possessions.

Charity Navigator, a non-profit U.S. organization that assesses charities, has identified Samaritan's Purse as one of the most effective disaster relief organizations helping Hurricane Harvey victims.

In recent years, Samaritan's Purse has assisted victims of a wide variety of natural disasters including flooding in New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, southern Alberta, and Nova Scotia, plus wildfires in Fort McMurray, AB and the B.C. interior.

Samaritan's Purse also helps victims of international disasters including the 2011 earthquake/tsunami in Japan, Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013, the 2015 earthquake in Nepal, and Hurricane Matthew in Haiti in 2016.

Volunteers Needed: Samaritan's Purse is welcoming applications from Canadians wishing to volunteer for one-week or two-week periods in Texas during the next few months. They'll be supervised by experienced staff, and work alongside volunteers who have served with Samaritan's Purse in the past. Please visit SamaritansPurse.ca for more information.

Donations Needed: Canadians can donate to Samaritan's Purse disaster relief work by visiting SamaritansPurse.ca or calling 1-800-663-6500. Funds will be used to train, equip, and deploy many Canadian volunteers to Texas.

Calgary News Media Opportunity Wednesday: A convoy of Samaritan's Purse and BGEA of Canada vehicles, including one of the Disaster Relief Unit tractor trailers, is returning to the organizations' Canadian headquarters in Calgary (20 Hopewell Way, NE) at about at about 2:15 p.m. Wednesday after serving for much of the summer in B.C. to help flood and wildfire victims. Several staff and volunteers will be available for interviews.

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, and providing safe water, vocational skills and agricultural supplies and training to families in the developing world. Learn more at SamaritansPurse.ca

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