



DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS TO SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY IN DISASTERS

Know the resources you have to offer.

In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus' final lessons are three parables centered on being prepared. Preparation for his return involves having the proper supplies (Matthew 25:1-13), investing resources appropriately (Matthew 25:14-30), and meeting the needs of the "least of these" (Matthew 25:31-45). The same mindset of preparedness has been key to churches engaging in disaster response. And one key task for preparedness is knowing the local leaders who will coordinate a response when a community experiences a disaster.

There are a lot of elements to forming a relationship with local emergency responders. One element is being able to share your capabilities as a church and as part of a larger disaster response network. This resource will help you compile and share that information.



Know what you have to offer

In conversations with local emergency managers, they have all agreed that they would love for churches to reach out to them. But neither party may know how to start the conversation. An attitude of service goes a long way - start with “How can we help you?”

Ideas (these are suggestions that came from specific local leaders or churches who have started the conversation well)

- Feeding - offering to provide food at planned community events, bringing lunch to local police, fire, rescue or emergency management once a month, reaching out to provide meals when a “small” disaster happens
- Offering your facility as a cooling or warming center
- Offering your facility to host outreach events or even regular meetings
- Host an event with help from Impact Disaster Response

Know what they have to offer

Some local emergency managers have realized that the servant approach to the relationship means they offer services before they ever ask for anything. They are all willing to have the conversation about what resources they have to offer your church. They probably wish more people would take advantage of the resources.

Ask about:

- Security assessments of your property
- Stop the Bleed training
- CPR/AED training
- Personally invite them to community events at your church



Disaster Response Capabilities of Your Church

When you start a conversation with a local emergency manager, especially if they are not used to churches doing so, they will likely start with asking about your capabilities. While you explore other avenues for relationship with them, it's helpful to be able to share those capabilities quickly. This checklist is not exhaustive but is a good start for what may be resources that would be helpful in a local disaster.

Facilities

- _____ Commercial Kitchen
- _____ Showers (Number)
- _____ Classroom space for sheltering
 - _____ Sprinkler system (required for housing people in some localities)
 - _____ Security cameras
 - _____ Generator on-site
 - _____ AED
- _____ Storage space
- _____ Church van or bus (number of seats)

Ongoing church ministries

- _____ Preschool
- _____ Food pantry/clothes closet
- _____ Home repair/small jobs
- _____ Crisis care
- _____ AA/NA/Celebrate recovery
- _____ Benevolence fund/emergency funds
- Other _____



Disaster Response Capabilities of Your Church

People and their skills or professions

- _____ Medical professionals
- _____ Emergency responders
 - _____ Law Enforcement
 - _____ Fire/rescue
- _____ Mental health professionals
- _____ Construction professionals
 - _____ General contractor
 - _____ Electrician
 - _____ Plumber
 - _____ HVAC technician
 - _____ Generally “handy” people
- _____ Teachers and childcare professionals
- _____ Foodservice professionals
- Other _____

Possible services to offer during a disaster

- _____ Shelter
- _____ Donation site
- _____ Distribution site (food or other goods)
- _____ Food preparation site
- _____ Service coordination site (base of operations for responders)
- Other _____



BGAV and Impact Disaster Response Capabilities

If a disaster is too big for a local team to respond, VDEM may become involved on the emergency management side, and BGAV may become involved on the faith/volunteer side. You can call on us the same as VDEM. If local partners are considering asking for more help, you can share our capabilities with them. In general we can respond within 72 hours with most of these resources.

Mass Feeding

Four mobile kitchens, one with 15,000 meal capacity, two with 3000 meal capacity, one with 500 meal capacity

Refrigerator truck and trailer

Cleanup and Recovery

Damage assessment

Mudout teams (muck and gut)

Chainsaw teams

Donations management and supply distribution

Long-term rebuild

Crisis care

Trained spiritual and emotional care providers deployed to every site

Shower/laundry

Shower units with individual stalls

Mobile laundry unit for limited public use

Flood Buckets and Hygiene Kits

Available for delivery to a locality typically with 72 hours' notice

