



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on November 2, 2012

Hurricane Sandy Showcases American Goodness

Hurricane Sandy has tested the resolve and the resources of the American people, but it has proven to be yet another opportunity for Americans to showcase their generosity and charitable natures.

Though the storm bombarded the East Coast and Mid-Atlantic portion of the United States, Americans from across the continent are doing their best to offer their services.

Approximately 100 volunteers from [Salt Lake City, Utah](#), are preparing to be deployed to New York to aid in recovery efforts. Two Salt Lake City volunteers have already arrived.



The volunteers will prove to be a significant help as the Federal Emergency Management Agency has already announced that recovery efforts in a number of areas may be significantly delayed.

“The response time normally 24 to 48 hours is going to be drastically reduced,” said Tom Panuzio, a FEMA consultant. “In other words, FEMA is not going to be able to get supplies in there soon enough because the storm is going to affect such a large area.”

Another Salt Lake City volunteer, Tina Spencer, is patiently awaiting a call to be the next relief worker deployed to New York. Spencer is a seasoned volunteer and is familiar with the scene that she will face when she arrives in New York, as she also volunteered in Louisiana after Hurricane Isaac.

“When you see trees uplifted, houses torn apart, cars destroyed, lives even destroyed, it’s devastating,” Spencer said. “To be able to help people in a disaster, there’s no other feeling to get to do that because I look at as what if that was me.”

Likewise, eight local volunteers at the American Red Cross in [Iowa](#) as well as 15 MidAmerican Energy workers headed to the Northeast to help with cleanup efforts on Saturday.

“We’re sending some people out there because it’s the right thing to do and we want to be able to provide assistance and support,” said Tina Potthoff, the media relations manager for MidAmerican Energy.

MidAmerican Energy has sent line workers and safety experts to assist in getting power turned back on.

“We’ve heard today that as many as 8,000,000 people could be without power and it will take time to complete those restoration efforts.”

Volunteers from Iowa’s Red Cross are hopeful that their presence and assistance will be of value to devastated Americans on the East Coast.

“To see somebody’s look in their eye when they just tell you thank you for being there,” said Tammie Pech, a volunteer with the American Red Cross.

Volunteers from the [Missouri](#) American Red Cross have also been deployed to areas battered by



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Hurricane Sandy.

The American Red Cross, Heart of Missouri Chapter has deployed five volunteers with two American response vehicles with assignments to provide water, comfort kit distributors and mass feeding efforts.

All over Facebook, users have posted photographs of strangers helping strangers. Residents in New York who are fortunate enough to have electricity in regions where many others don't have placed extension cords outside of their homes for passersby to use to charge their cell phones with signs that read, "We have power. Please feel free to charge your phone."

Paul Dziewisz of Bucks County, Pennsylvania, one of the hardest hit regions in the state, has set up a Facebook group to offer help to storm victims in various parts of Bucks County.

CBS local reports, "He and his Facebook colleagues are hoping to connect volunteers with people who need help. They're asking people to give up one day this weekend to help clear storm damage from people's homes and roads."

Scott Homquist of the Billy Graham Rapid Response Team was dispatched from North Carolina to the Northeast equipped with bags and Bibles. He brought two other volunteers and drove to the coast of New Jersey to assist victims in cleaning debris and getting food, and to share the Gospel with those who require comfort in their time of need.

"Having been the recipient of so much in my life, I just feel like God is putting a care for others into our hearts," said Holmquist, 55. "To be a part of that emotional and spiritual care in other peoples lives who have been devastated by this hurricane and now bigger-than-hurricane aftermath, it's so important."

The *Huffington Post* [notes](#) that a number of other religious groups have launched their own relief efforts:

Others, such as Islamic Relief U.S.A., which has [set up](#) shelters New Brunswick, N.J., and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which [maintains](#) food storehouses across the U.S., are motivated by faith but keep their services secular. Other faith-based organizations, such as the [Jewish Federations](#) of North America and [Catholic Charities](#), both which have offices in cities across the U.S., have launched large-scale efforts to solicit donations for disaster relief.

Celebrities are also moved by the heartbreaking stories coming out of Hurricane Sandy. On Friday night, a number of stations will be streaming "[Hurricane Sandy: Coming Together](#)," hosted by Matt Lauer. Performances will include Bruce Springstein, Billy Joel, Jon Bon Jovi, Sting, Christina Aguilera, and a number of others at Rockefeller Center.

Proceeds from the event will go to the American Red Cross.

E! talk show host Chelsea Lately has donated \$100,000 to the Red Cross. And shoe company Crocs donated \$75K worth of shoes and \$100K worth of supplies to areas with the greatest need.

Kellogg has donated \$100K worth of cereal to Feeding American to help with efforts in New York. That is in addition to \$500K in cash and food donations to support all areas impacted by Sandy. StarKist has donated nearly \$100K worth of tuna to people in Queens, New York.

Viacom and Walt Disney have [donated](#) \$3 million to Hurricane Sandy relief, and have launched programs to match employee donations. Additionally, Disney-ABC Television Group and ESPN will be running public service announcements on ABC, ABCNews.com, Radio Disney, ABC.com, and ESPN's networks to encourage viewers to donate.



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News Corps has also made a \$1 million donation to hurricane relief.

[Lowe's](#) has donated \$1 million to help communities affected by Hurricane Sandy.

“Our thoughts are with all the families who have been impacted by this historic storm, and we’re focused on working closely with our partners in the days and months ahead to deliver funding, supplies and volunteer support to the hardest-hit areas,” said Robert A. Niblock, Lowe’s chairman, president and CEO. “We’re proud to stand by the Red Cross as they continue to respond to the needs of local communities.”

Photo: Red Cross Grand Canyon Chapter volunteer, Martha Iskyan of Fountain Hills, Ariz., gets ready to board a flight to Philadelphia to help victims of superstorm Sandy, Oct. 31, 2012, in

Phoenix: AP Images



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