

TBM chainsaw teams serve after tornado hits East Texas

March 30, 2021

MOUNT ENTERPRISE—Texas Baptist Men chainsaw teams from Harmony-Pittsburg Baptist Association and Central East Texas are meeting needs after a tornado hit Mount Enterprise in Rusk County on March 27.

TBM disaster relief assessors were surveying the damage the same day as the storm, and chainsaw teams deployed shortly after.

A TBM shower unit from Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, along with a TBM feeding team from Lindale, are supporting the chainsaw crews as they cut and clear fallen trees and limbs in the affected area for free.

“We were monitoring the line of storms all day,” said David Wells, director of TBM disaster relief. “As soon as we confirmed a tornado touched ground, TBM volunteers were on the scene following the storm. Now, about 30 chainsaw volunteers are delivering help, hope and healing in the name of Christ during some of the most difficult days of people’s lives.”

Gene Walker, who is leading the Harmony-Pittsburg Baptist Association unit, said the damage is significant. The team already has cut down an 80-foot tree that was hanging over a house, as well as a huge tree that was sitting on a propane tank.

“The storm has a trail of about 40 miles,” he said. “It came down, then it hopped up, then it came down. Where it came down, it was devastating. It was random.”

While the chainsaws cut broken limbs, the volunteers lift spirits. They encourage residents who were affected by the tornado. They help people

process what they've experienced.

"We're doing this because we can," Walker said. "We've been given the ability and skill to do this in the past. We love to help people. When the time is appropriate, we share the gospel. We pray with people."

To support TBM disaster relief financially, give online at TBM.org/donate or mail a check to Texas Baptist Men, 5351 Catron Drive, Dallas, TX 75227.