

# TBM serves first responders after Hurricane Harvey

August 28, 2017

Even before evacuated residents could return to their homes, Texas Baptist Men disaster relief volunteers were serving meals to first responders on the hurricane-ravaged Gulf coast.

Meanwhile, more than 7,000 trained TBM disaster relief volunteers remain on alert to respond to what some experts are calling one of the worst natural disasters in U.S. history.

Hurricane Harvey made landfall late evening Aug. 25 near Rockport as a Category 4 storm before slowly continuing up the coastline and dumping up to two feet of rain within 24 hours, causing catastrophic flooding in multiple counties.

## **TBM serves Texas Task Force 1**

A TBM rapid-response food-service crew continues to provide meals for about 150 first responders with the Texas Task Force 1 search-and-rescue team in the wake of the hurricane and subsequent flooding.



Texas Baptist Men disaster relief volunteers serve meals to first responders with Texas Task Force 1 on the Gulf Coast. (TBM Photo)

The TBM crew initially served in Robstown, west of Corpus Christi, but the volunteers planned to relocate with Task Force 1 Aug. 28 to somewhere in the Houston area, more than 200 miles to the northeast.

TBM food-service crews from Lubbock Baptist Association and Tarrant Baptist Association also were preparing meals for first responders in Victoria and Uvalde.

Volunteers with TBM shower and laundry units were at work Aug. 27 in Robstown, San Antonio and LaGrange, and other TBM volunteers have been given responsibility to provide childcare at a 5,000-person capacity shelter in Dallas.

TBM also will be one of the service providers at a mega-shelter in downtown Houston, once roadways are clear enough for safe travel in and out of the city.

An additional two-dozen disaster relief units, including chainsaw, mud-out, heavy equipment and blue-tarp temporary roofers, already are scheduled for deployment, and many more will be called on in the future, said Dwain Carter, deputy director for TBM disaster relief.

The Baptist Health Foundation of San Antonio board voted Aug. 25 to provide a \$50,000 grant to TBM—along with another \$50,000 grant to the Salvation Army—for disaster relief in South Texas.

**Long-term commitment after hurricane**



Forklift operator Joseph Wallace (left) from First Baptist Church in Purves and Roy Boyer from First Baptist Church in Granbury load insulated food containers onto a tractor-trailer rig bound for the Texas Gulf Coast. (Photo / Ken Camp)

TBM disaster relief leaders expect the duration of response by their volunteers to be measured in months, rather than weeks.

“This will be the largest TBM disaster relief operation in our 50-year history,” TBM Executive Director Mickey Lenamon said.

Lenamon had a message for trained volunteers who are eager to respond immediately: “Don’t be discouraged or frustrated if you are not called out right away. Just wait. You will be needed.”

Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers from up to 20 states also are on alert, waiting to respond in Texas.

Texas Baptist Men is accepting crates of bottled water for distribution along the Gulf Coast. Donated water can be left at a designated staging area at the Dixon Missions Equipping Center at 5351 Catron Dr. in east

Dallas from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

*To contribute financially to TBM disaster relief, click [here](#) or send a check designated “disaster relief” to Texas Baptist Men, 5351 Catron, Dallas 75227.*

*EDITOR’S NOTE: Three dozen Texas Baptist Men Disaster Relief volunteers left Dallas Wednesday morning, Aug. 30, en route to Houston. They will report to the George R. Brown Convention Center, where they expect to prepare meals for more than 9,000 people who are housed in an emergency shelter there.*