

Texans on Mission flood recovery teams help families

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Consuelo Oliva woke up suddenly at 3 a.m. Rain was pounding on the roof and windows of her home. The rain kept falling and falling—fast and hard. She had never experienced so much rain at one time.

“I was getting scared, and the kids were getting scared. ... We couldn’t sleep because we were afraid the water level was going to rise, and it did, in seconds. ... I kept praying for the rain to stop,” Oliva said.

The rain continued to pour and soon it entered Oliva’s home. Their whole home flooded with several inches of water. Oliva said they stepped onto the floor from the bed and their feet were covered in water.

“It was horrible. We couldn’t find our way out. It was all surrounded by water,” she said.

A year’s worth of rain in one day

Oliva’s home was one of many that flooded in the Rio Grande Valley after excessive rain at the end of March. Some areas received more than 16 inches of rain—equivalent to one year’s worth of rain for the area—in one day.

Texans on Mission deployed assessors, shower and laundry, box distribution and flood recovery teams to the area. The flooding was so widespread, the need was great.

“The impact of the flooding in the Rio Grande Valley was felt far and wide,” said David Wells, Texans on Mission director of disaster relief. “We knew

we needed to respond, but it was challenging to coordinate the teams to go since we still had teams in Missouri and Oklahoma on deployment.”

But Texans on Mission volunteers “stepped up to offer help and hope to those needing relief in the Rio Grande Valley,” Wells said.

It took three days for the water to recede from Oliva’s home. She was despondent over the damage. She and her husband bought the land her home sat on 35 years ago, and they slowly built their home over the years. And in an instant, all their possessions were lost.

Oliva’s husband started to pull out insulation. It was filled with so much water, he could wring it like a sponge and water just poured out. Sheetrock and furniture were ruined. It didn’t take long for mold to start growing as well.

“I told my husband, ‘Please tell me that I’m dreaming.’ It was bad. It was really bad,” Oliva said.

‘Help is coming tomorrow’

Oliva’s husband Tomas works six days a week. So, after the flood he was only able to work on the house one day a week. Cleanup was happening slowly until a Texans on Mission flood recovery team showed up and finished the job in one day.

Oliva said her daughter learned about Texans on Mission from her school. She called and said, “Mom, there’s people here that say they can go over there and help you.”



Consuelo Oliva receives a Bible from the Texans on Mission team that

worked on her flooded home in the Rio Grande Valley. (Texans on Mission Photo)

Oliva said she instantly felt “blessed and relieved.” Still, she thought they would have to wait weeks for the team to show up but was surprised when they called within a week and said the team would be at her house the next day.

“I was really happy,” Oliva said. “I called my husband and said: ‘They’re going to come tomorrow. The help is coming tomorrow!’”

The Texans on Mission team spent all day at Oliva’s home, tearing out ruined sheetrock and insulation, cleaning to remove mold and moving furniture.

As the team worked on her home, they also were able to connect with Oliva and her family, encourage them and show them the love of Christ.

“I felt so blessed and relieved,” Oliva said. “I’m so thankful for you guys coming to help us. And everyone is safe. All this we can buy slowly. But life we can’t buy.”