

Texas Baptist Men provide relief in wake of fire and rain

October 1, 2015

DALLAS—[Texas Baptist Men](#) disaster relief volunteers have seen the devastating impact of fire and rain in the Pacific Northwest and on a Pacific island, and they provided ministry to people affected by the disasters.



An airtanker drops fire retardant over the advancing Chelan Butte wildfire (part of the Chelan Complex fire) in Chelan, Wa., Aug. 14. (Photo: Ben Brooks/ Flickr/ Creative Commons) More than 40 volunteers worked in an area north of Spokane, Wash., as part of [an extensive ash-out effort](#) after wildfires charred more than 300,000 acres in the state and destroyed at least 175 homes.

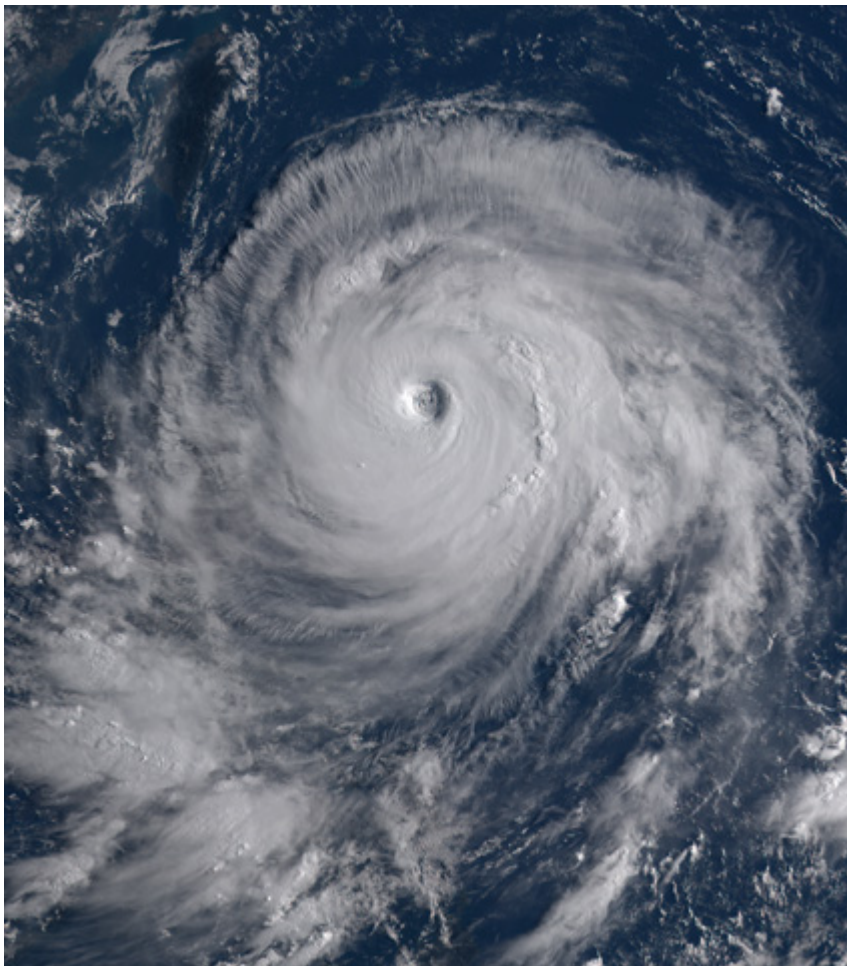
An initial crew from [Collin Baptist Association](#) arrived Sept. 28, and additional volunteers from [Harmony-Pittsburg Baptist Association](#) and [Paramount Baptist Church in Amarillo](#), as well as individual volunteers from around Texas, went to work Sept. 30.

Volunteers helped residents sift through the ashes of their destroyed homes

to reclaim personal possessions not consumed by the fires. They often used that opportunity to talk about their faith in Christ, TBM Executive Director Don Gibson said.

Additional TBM volunteers worked with an incident management team and as chaplains, all serving at the invitation of the Northwest Baptist Convention.

Meanwhile, a TBM assessment team journeyed to Saipan—a U.S. commonwealth in the Northern Mariana Islands, south of Japan and west of Hawaii—at the request of the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention.



Typhoon Goni struck Saipan and Guam in late August. (Wikipedia Photo) Two typhoons pounded the island in early August. One was the strongest to hit Saipan in 30 years,

said Terry Henderson, TBM disaster relief director.

“There is no electricity on part of the island, and it is not expected to be restored until the end of October,” Henderson said.

Baptists from Guam provided immediate disaster relief, supplying up to 1,000 meals a day, he noted.

TBM workers delivered water filters and demonstrated how to use them during the initial assessment trip. The typhoon polluted aquifers with salt water, which cannot be made potable through simple filtration. But most residents collect rainwater in cisterns, and it needs to be purified, Henderson noted.

“TBM has been requested to help coordinate long-term recovery efforts,” he said. Initial requests have focused on repairing tin roofs; materials are not available in the region, he added.

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

With additional reporting by Grace Gaddy of Texas Baptist Men