

# Training important for TBM chainsaw crews

March 31, 2023

Tornadoes and ice storms have kept Texas Baptist Men Disaster Relief chainsaw crews busy the first part of this year, and multiple training opportunities are available this spring for those who would like to become part of this ministry.



Texas Baptist Men chainsaw volunteer Don Rasmussen from Northway Baptist Church in Angleton and other TBM volunteers removed limbs from trees damaged by a series of tornadoes that hit the Houston area and Southeast Texas. (TBM Photo / Ferrell Foster)

“Our TBM chainsaw crews do such great work, and the doors are always open for new volunteers,” said David Wells, state disaster relief director. “Training is important to keep our crews operating safely, and we have a number of training opportunities this spring.”

Wendell Romans leads TBM chainsaw efforts. He is an expert in tree and limb removal, but the spiritual purposes of the TBM ministry is what makes it different from simply providing a service.

Chainsaw ministry helps volunteers connect with people, Romans said. Survivors of disasters are asking questions like: Why did this happen to me? Where is God in all of this?

Survivors are in a vulnerable emotional and spiritual state, but there are also financial challenges that come as a result of property destruction.

“When I talk to a homeowner about their tree damage,” Romans said, “I almost always get the question, ‘How much is this going to cost me?’”

Romans said when he gets that question, he draws closer and looks the person in the eyes.

“I answer: ‘We are the most expensive tree workers in the world, but the price for your work was paid when Jesus died on the cross.’ That is when the homeowner and I usually both cry.”

Chainsaw work involves powerful machinery and heavy broken limbs, Wells said.

“Handling both the equipment and the chaotic situations requires a lot of training and coordination of the work,” he said.

## **Training opportunities**

TBM chainsaw crews are part of broader disaster relief efforts, and team members must complete the disaster relief orientation course before pursuing more specific training. Three orientation sessions are still available this spring. These dates and locations are listed below with links to more information and registration information.

- March 31 in Conroe (Walk-in registrations are allowed the day of the training.)
- April 15 in Belton
- May 19 in Weatherford

Disaster relief orientation can also be completed [online by registering here](#).

After disaster relief orientation, basic chainsaw training is the next step. It is being offered three times this spring, as well: April 1 in Conroe, April 22 in Marble Falls and May 20 in Weatherford.

TBM chainsaw crews continue to diversify their skills. People who have completed DR Orientation and Basic Chainsaw Training, can engage in other opportunities, such as three related training activities in Houston this spring.

- May 2-6, Ground Support & Rescue Training
- May 2-6, Climbing & Rescue Training
- May 6, Rescue Training

To learn more about TBM Disaster Relief visit the web page [here](#).