

Volunteers needed for home repairs in Weslaco

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WESLACO—Texas Baptists' Disaster Recovery program seeks volunteers to repair a dozen flood-damaged homes of low-income residents near the Rio Grande.

Some affected families and individuals in Weslaco suffered flood damage twice last year—first during Memorial Day flash floods that affected large areas of Central and South Texas, and again in October when the remnants of Hurricane Patricia dumped rain on the Rio Grande Valley.



In the immediate aftermath of floods in Weslaco, Texas Baptist Men disaster relief volunteers provided mud-out service to residents. Now volunteers are needed to hang drywall, tape and bed sheetrock, paint and install flooring. (TBM Photo) Texas Baptist Men disaster relief volunteers responded to immediate needs, providing “mud-out” services. They removed damaged drywall, soaked insulation and saturated flooring from the affected houses before

power-washing and disinfecting them.

Volunteers requested

Now, volunteers are needed to hang drywall, tape and bed the sheetrock, paint and install flooring.

One person per team with specialized construction experience is sufficient if other team members are willing to learn, noted Gerald Davis, disaster recovery development specialist with the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

People in need

“This is a very low-income area,” said Marla Bearden, Texas Baptist disaster recovery specialist. “None of the people we have identified have flood insurance. Many have no homeowners’ insurance at all. A lot of these people are elderly.”

If churches that send volunteer could assume half the cost of building materials, Texas Baptists’ Disaster Recovery program can provide matching funds, she noted.

“These are very small homes, so the cost should be minimal,” she said.

Volunteer teams will be housed in church buildings in Weslaco or Donna. Volunteers will prepare their own meals and assume responsibility for that expense.

While an organized response is scheduled June 11-16 in Weslaco, Bearden hopes Texas Baptists will respond sooner. Although weather conditions have been relatively mild so far during the winter months, many of the residents are living in houses that lack insulation and floor covering, leaving them vulnerable, she noted.

Help in Ciudad Acuña

Additional volunteers are needed to rebuild homes in Ciudad Acuña, across the Rio Grande from Del Rio. Organized disaster recovery projects for students and adults are scheduled at spring break, March 13-17, and in the summer, June 13-17, but individual church mission trips can be scheduled other times.

“Texas Baptists have a long history of ministry along the Rio Grande. We want to call Texas Baptists back to the border,” Davis said.

For more information about disaster recovery projects in Weslaco or Ciudad Acuña, contact Bearden at (214) 828-5382 or marla.bearden@texasbaptists.org, Davis at (214) 828-5392 or gerald.davis@texasbaptists.org or click [here](#).