

NORTH GEORGIA DISASTER RESPONSE MINISTRY

EMERGENCY DISASTER CALLING CHAIN

Pastors _____
Phone Number
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District Superintendent _____
Phone Number
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District Disaster Coordinator (DDRC) _____
Phone Number
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Conference Disaster Coordinator (CDC) _____
Phone Number

(Responsible for contacting the American Red Cross, Georgia Emergency Management Agency, Ministry Executive Team Chairperson & Bishop)

AFTER A DISASTER IS CONFIRMED

1. Pastors call your District Superintendent (DS). Inform DS of condition of your community, church, etc.
2. District Superintendents (DS) call your District Disaster Response Coordinator (DDRC). Inform your DDRC of condition of your district, churches, etc.
3. District Disaster Response Coordinators (DDRC) call the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC).
4. Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC) will then contact the American Red Cross, Georgia Emergency Management Agency, and VOAD to get additional information and an assessment of the damages and to see what we can do to help. Once this information is gathered, the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator will contact the Bishop to inform him/her of the situation.
5. Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and/or Chairperson of Disaster Response Ministry Executive Team will contact the District Disaster Response Coordinator.
6. The DDRC will be responsible for getting in contact with his/her people and making sure that his/her team gets to the site.
7. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator and/or Chair will dispatch Disaster Response Trailers to disaster site.

DS - District Superintendent
DDRC - District Disaster Response Coordinator
CDRC - Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
VOAD - Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

Grants will be available to help churches and individuals recover from disaster. Please contact the Conference Disaster Coordinator for further information. If you would like to be placed in our Disaster Response Database, please call the Conference Disaster Coordinator for further information.

II. LOCAL CLERGY

EARLY PREPARATION PHASE

- Become familiar with Conference Disaster Response Plan.
- Develop contacts with Law Enforcement, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Emergency Management and Community Service.
- Work with your local Church Council to create a disaster plan for the Local Church. Elect a Local Church Disaster Coordinator at Charge Conference.
- Have the Trustees review insurance policies on all properties and risk management (what you can and cannot do). Remember Wind and Flood coverage.
- Inventory facilities to be used for a Red Cross Shelter. *A written agreement between the Red Cross and the local church is necessary.* Please contact the Red Cross in your area to establish this relationship. Identify special features or resources for use in an emergency (Kitchen, Day Care, Supply of Food, and Fellowship Hall to house helpers and workers).
- Identify special needs such as unemployed, elderly, disabled, refugees, immigrants, etc. Inventory personal possessions, store documents, have supply of food, first aid kit, flashlights, portable radio, and other items useful in an emergency for at least 72 hours.

WHEN A DISASTER IS IMMINENT PHASE

- Monitor the Media for updates.
- If told by the authorities to evacuate, **GO!** Notify DS.
- Notify law enforcement or rescue workers of homebound, who need to be evacuated.

AFTER A DISASTER STRIKES - EMERGENCY PHASE

Assess your own damage **FIRST!** Monitor damage to your parish through media reports. Do not interfere with any ongoing relief efforts.

RELIEF PHASE

A. Parish Assessment

- Assess the welfare of members and special-needs populations within the community.
- Have the Board of Trustees determine if church property is damaged. If so, report damage to District Superintendent, and Insurance Company. Report community damage to District Disaster Coordinator (DDC).

B. Relief Help

- In Low and Medium Level Disasters (see page 4) organize volunteers to assist relief workers and victims, and to clean up. Let local Emergency Personnel and Law Enforcement know where you plan to work. In High Level Disasters contact your District Disaster Coordinator (see page 4). (NOTE: PREMATURE ASSISTANCE CAN LOWER A VICTIM'S INSURANCE SETTLEMENT)

RECOVERY PHASE

- Be an active part of the local religious community's long-term response. Focus on things your church can do.
- If Grants are needed, work with applicants. Promote offerings for Disaster Relief in response to any Episcopal appeal, channeling funds to the Conference through the Conference Advance or UMCOR Advance.

III. LOCAL CHURCH

EARLY PREPARATION PHASE

The Church Council

- Call the UMCOR Hotline 1-800-918-3100.
- Establish a plan to receive volunteer teams from outside the area.
- Compile list of volunteers to serve as companions, listen, run errands, make phone calls etc.
- Develop a local disaster plan, review it annually, and encourage families to develop a personal disaster plan.
- Compile a list of volunteers to serve food, do clean up, provide transportation, childcare, and reconstruction.
- Organize support groups and serve on interfaith recovery agencies.
- If your church has a nurturing committee, the following is suggested:
 1. Assess special needs of populations within the community;
 2. Compile list of home-bound for local rescue squad;
 3. Organize teams to check on members before and after the disaster.

Board of Trustees

- Should annually review insurance coverage, provide a safe repository of valuable record, and inventory church property and contents.
- Consider using your facility as a potential shelter or service center. *A written agreement between the American Red Cross and the Local Church is necessary.* Please contact the Red Cross in your area to establish this relationship.

WHEN A DISASTER IS IMMINENT PHASE

- Monitor the media for updates.
- Board of Trustees should secure the church; remove swinging signs, board or shutter windows, and secure church records.
- If church is a certified shelter, follow the instructions of the Red Cross and prepare to open.

AFTER A DISASTER STRIKES -EMERGENCY PHASE

- Concentrate on rescue efforts; do not interfere with rescue or emergency personnel.
- If homes are damaged, discourage outsiders from entering the area.
- Communications will be complicated, follow instructions of emergency personnel.

RELIEF PHASE

- Activate groups and coordinate activities with District Disaster Coordinator (DDC) and the pastor.
- An interfaith effort may be necessary.
- The Red Cross handles emergency living expenses. Victims can receive vouchers for temporary housing, food, and clothing.
- If your church is involved in the clean up, ***do not*** do any repairs until government and insurance companies have assessed the damage.
- Keep a journal.
- If the disaster is federally recognized, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will open a Disaster Recovery Center.

LOCAL CHURCH cont.

RECOVERY PHASE

Promote offerings for Disaster Relief in response to any Episcopal appeal, channeling funds to the Conference through the Conference Advance or UMCOR Advance.

AFTERMATH PHASE

Assess the role of your community, District, and Conference.

IV. DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

The District Disaster Coordinator (DDC) is your appointee and should not assume your authority or role.

EARLY PREPARATION PHASE

- Be familiar with the Conference Disaster Plan and its application for your area.
- DCOM shall train annually and develop a district disaster plan under the guidance of the District Disaster Coordinator (DDC).
- Locate churches actively involved in community assistance programs.
- Be familiar with Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA). Inform them how your district will be involved in disaster relief.

WHEN A DISASTER IS IMMINENT PHASE

- Monitor the Media for updates.
- Contact the Conference Disaster Coordinator (DDC) and prepare for possible action.

AFTER A DISASTER STRIKES - EMERGENCY PHASE

- Monitor the damage to your district through media reports. Do not interfere with relief efforts.
- Assist District Disaster Coordinator (DDC); begin checking damage and injuries in the area.

RELIEF PHASE

- Tour the affected area with your District Disaster Coordinator, Conference Disaster Coordinator, and the Bishop.
- Listen! Listen carefully to the affected pastors and people.
- If shelters are open, tour the shelters. Provide pastoral care to the shelter if none is available.
- Be available to District and Conference Leadership.
- Since the Bishop usually initiates an appeal for a special offering for disaster relief and recovery work, you will need to determine if you need to ask for financial assistance through the Bishop's office. (Discuss this matter with the Conference Disaster Coordinator).
- Compile your estimates with District Disaster Coordinator's estimates. Convey information to Conference Disaster Coordinator.
- Organize and meet with ministers in the affected area.
- If damage is extensive, hire a part-time worker, using a Block Grant where needed (see page 20 for more information about Block Grants).
- Monitor your pastors.

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT cont.

RECOVERY PHASE

- Keep in touch with District Disaster Coordinator or Conference Disaster Coordinator. Make additional visits to the disaster area.
- Encourage unaffected churches to share their facilities and furnish leadership and workers.
- Things that can be done to avoid problems for the local pastor:
 - a. Let the congregation know how much their pastor's work is appreciated;
 - b. If the workload is excessive, hire a part time person (funds available through Block Grants);
 - c. Use retired minister;
 - d. Approve all grants for funds.

IN THE AFTERMATH PHASE

- Check with the Conference Disaster Coordinator (DDC) to determine when assistance can be terminated.
- Meet with the DCOM to evaluate the District Plan and how it worked.
- Make report to Bishop. District Coordinator makes final report to the MET.
- Publicly acknowledge workers and work done.
- Encourage care for pastors and families.

VII. RESIDENT BISHOP

EARLY PREPARATION PHASE

- Become familiar with the Conference Disaster Plan.
- Promote training through Chairperson of the Disaster Response Ministry Team. Encourage the CCOM to consider disaster response in each board or agency's guidelines.
- Encourage pastors and churches to use plan to prepare for disasters.
- Attend training, emphasizing the need.

WHEN A DISASTER IS IMMINENT PHASE

- Monitor the media for updates.
- If your area is expected to be affected and an evacuation is recommended, move and set up a temporary office in a church away from the disaster area.

AFTER A DISASTER STRIKES - EMERGENCY PHASE

- If you are a victim, listen to emergency personnel and follow their instructions.
- Monitor damages through media.

RESIDENT BISHOP cont.

RELIEF PHASE

- Plan tour for damage assessment with Conference Disaster Coordinator (CDC), Conference Coordinator of Communications, Director of the CCOM, DS, and their District Disaster Coordinators.
- Request assistance, financial or personnel, from UMCOR if needed.
- Assist MET in organizing relief. Determine and recommend an Episcopal appeal for funds if necessary.
- A completed report on type/level of assistance should be prepared by the Chair of the MET that will be sent to the Bishop. If resources are needed which require specialized help, assistance can be received from UMCOR.

RECOVERY PHASE

- Think long range: the recovery can take up to several years.
- Monitor the progress by keeping in touch with the Conference Disaster Coordinator (CDC).
- Insist that agencies of the Conference cooperate and help as needed.
- Consider appointing retired Pastors as temporary assistants to Pastors and District Superintendents.
- Make further financial appeals to Conference and to UMCOR, as needed.
- Make periodically visits to the disaster area.

IN THE AFTERMATH PHASE

- Have all involved leadership meet for reports and evaluations. Receive copies of reports and evaluations.
- Publicly acknowledge workers and work done.
- Plan for a service of praise a year from the date the disaster struck.