



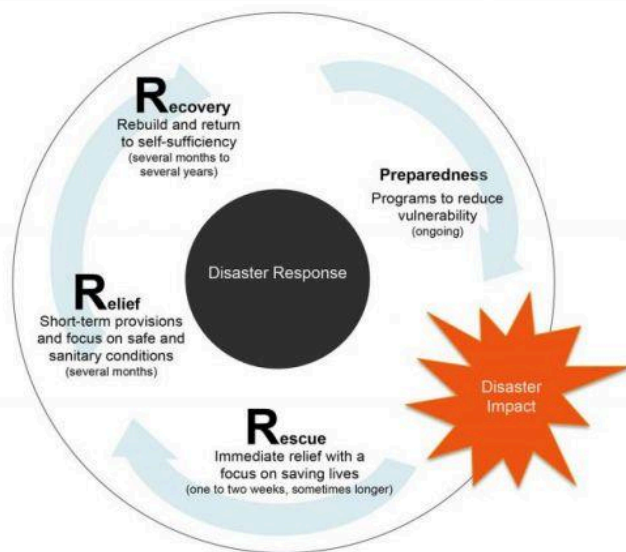
## Burners Without Borders: A BURNING MAN PROJECT

### Hurricane Response Resources [Living Document]

**We are living in a world where we can expect to only see an increasing number of yearly natural disasters.** Each time a new hurricane makes landfall, there's a swell of energy towards supporting the communities impacted. This is a living document to support individuals in this work. If you have edits or additions, please use the 'comment' function in google docs.

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### Phases to a Disaster: What sort of help can I provide?



It's important to remember that there are several phases to any Disaster:

- Emergency Rescue & Response
- Relief
- Long-term Recovery.

The **immediate disaster response** during a state of emergency is almost always something that **requires specialized training**. Unless you have a specific skill set and an organization that you're working with, it is not advised for volunteers to try to be helpful during this phase of a disaster. You will almost always be putting yourself and others at risk.

During an active emergency, evacuate yourself, seek safety, and don't put other people in harm's way by needing to be rescued, if at all possible. If you're interested in volunteering remotely during the rescue phase (which can often be super helpful for gathering info and dispatch needs), connect with a group like [Cajun Navy Relief](#) or find a local mutual aid group in your area.

The **Relief** period is the time that **sees the most volunteerism and energy**. This is when people are setting up pop-up kitchens, distributing clothes, and helping with the immediate survival needs that are arising for folks who have been displaced or lost everything.

The **Recovery and Rebuild** stage of a disaster is **when the most help is needed**, and when it's the least "sexy" to help. There are never enough volunteers during this phase, which can continue for years. Learn more about what to expect as a volunteer during different phases of disaster here: [https://medium.com/@tomprice\\_22461/after-the-storm-90f82ba2578a](https://medium.com/@tomprice_22461/after-the-storm-90f82ba2578a)

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## How can my community support a disaster-affected community?

### 1. Donate Money

Almost every time, it is more useful for someone to stay home and donate money to local folks who are rebuilding their community, especially during the immediate aftermath of a disaster. Your donations are likely to go farther when you send them to local organizations responding to the needs of their own communities. We recommend always doing your research and finding the organizations that are working in close partnership with the communities affected by the disaster. Here is a [totally not exhaustive list of great grassroots organizations](#) to get you started. While this isn't always the 'sexiest' way to support a disaster- remember, Burners are great at doing events and raising funds- and it's the **BEST** way to contribute, especially from afar.

### 2. Donate Blood

Medical issues are almost always the most critical need in the wake of a disaster. Finding a blood drive anywhere in the country can help get blood to those having medical issues in a disaster zone, and hospitals often run out of blood quickly in the wake of disasters. You can find a blood collection center here: <https://www.redcross.org/give-blood.html>

### 3. Volunteer Time & Energy

Volunteering when you have the capacity is an essential part of disaster recovery, especially in the longer-term rebuilding phases.

If you already live in an area that is affected by a natural disaster, simply extending a helping hand to your neighbor can make a huge difference. *Disasters tend to create deep community bonding experiences in the recovery efforts- this is a great time to meet those who live around you and figure out how to collaborate.*

You can also volunteer with established organizations if no BWB or grassroots efforts are available. Many organizations need help answering phones, sorting through donated items, removing debris, interacting with disaster survivors, entering data, or delivering goods like food and water to those in need.

Just remember to be self-reliant when coming into a region to volunteer. Organizations have a name for those who come to volunteer- and end up needing more help than the survivors themselves: **Spontaneous Uninvited Volunteers (SUV). Don't be an SUV!**

Here's a few catch-all groups that offer a wide range of services following a disaster (there are always many local groups that are region-specific, and we recommend doing the research):

[www.nvod.org](http://www.nvod.org)

[www.serve.org](http://www.serve.org)

[www.citizenscorps.gov](http://www.citizenscorps.gov)

[www.networkforgood.org](http://www.networkforgood.org)

[www.internationaldisastervolunteers.org](http://www.internationaldisastervolunteers.org)

#### 4. Donate Goods

This is usually *the last way that it makes sense to help*, though what people will usually gravitate towards. Often, distribution centers receive (literal) tons of clothes, household items, and random stuff that is really not helpful for the context. People often send things like winter jackets to a tropical storm or use donations as an excuse to get rid of less than ideal items that nobody really wants to use. Donated goods are often sent in mixed bags or boxes, meaning that as soon as the containers are opened, there can be a huge mess, risk of dirtying the goods, and molding if there's not a great place to properly sort and store the items that are actually useful. The work that goes into organizing and safely storing these unwanted items means that these things are eventually thrown away, after using up a bunch of energy, resources, and volunteer hours that could have been deployed in a much more helpful way.

*The list of things to avoid when gathering donations may shock you, but make sure you do not send these items to collection stations:*

*\*Bottled water (it's too expensive to ship)*

*\*Canned food (shipping and climate control can compromise the food)*

*\*Toys*

*\*Clothes*

*Medical supplies (they can't verify the quality of the products)*

If you plan to donate goods, make sure that you have confirmed that you are sending products that have been asked for by the community you're supporting. Check with trusted organizations and community organizing hubs for wish lists- you'll notice things like fuel, generators, mattresses, and water most of the time.

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#### Reading Resources:

[“So You Want to go Help?” by BWB Volunteer Nick Heyming](#): (Great Reading!)

[Why is helping after a disaster so Hard?](#) (From Vox)

[Florida Specific Hurricane Resources](#)

[Health & Safety Information for being in a Hurricane Zone](#) (Written 2017):

[Flood Clean-up & Air Quality \(Illustrated\)](#) by the EPA: