



PRESS RELEASE

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Red Cross grants awarded to Galveston County Hurricane Harvey Recovery

TEXAS CITY, Texas: One year after Hurricane Harvey, the Texas Gulf Coast remains in a state of active recovery. Home assessments, mucking, and gutting - the work of cleanup, rebuild and repair continues throughout Galveston County. One year later, as many as 1,318 homeowners are still in need of a variety of recovery-associated assistance.

For many homeowners without insurance, less than enough insurance - or those struggling with repair costs exceeding available resources - charitable organizations and faith-based groups are taking the lead in helping families recover.

The Galveston County Long Term Recovery Group (GCLTRG) is one such group. Established in October 2017 in association with the Mainland Community Partnership, the GCLTRG provides coordinated management of the long-term recovery process. They assist individuals and families affected by disasters who do not have adequate personal resources for their unique recovery needs. More importantly, they serve as advocates for Galveston County's most vulnerable residents - especially seniors, individuals with disabilities and lower income families - facilitating recovery to a safe, sanitary and functional status.

With an established reputation for responding to emergencies big and small on a daily basis, the American Red Cross stepped in partnering with the GCLTRG.

"The Red Cross has been working with Federal, state and local officials, as well as other non-profit organizations, to identify unmet needs stemming from Hurricane Harvey," said Henry Van de Putte, Chief Executive, American Red Cross Texas Gulf Coast.

In August, The Red Cross awarded one grant to the Mainland Community Partnership for \$137,500 for support staff. There were also two grants of \$312,000 and \$499,375 awarded to the GCLTRG for outreach to vulnerable populations, budgeting, financial education, and the unmet needs of clients. (All three grants support Galveston County Recovery efforts.)

For the GCLTRG, The Red Cross grants support critical needs. In its capacity, the GCLTRG puts available funding to good use, volunteers to work and develops tentative plans of action for immediate outreach. According to Lynda Perez, Director, Mainland Community Partnership, "The grants fund the purchase of building materials to repair homes and pay staff who (lead) the volunteers who are rebuilding homes."



She continued, “What we’ve done is start funding unmet needs cases (including the replacement of furniture and appliances for homeowners), funding construction on homes that are excluded from the Community Development Block Grant Program, and we’ve begun outreach efforts targeting the most vulnerable - aligning with our mission.”

Perez also notes, “The funds also support employment of staff who assist LTRG operations, as most members of the group are volunteers.”

The Red Cross is working closely with LTRGs to find collaborative solutions to the many challenges families are facing to get back into their homes. The Red Cross has provided funding for a staff person for active long-term recovery groups across Texas. In Galveston County, The Red Cross implements a three-tier approach to recovery.

First, The Red Cross is offering financial recovery assistance. Known as Hurricane Harvey Funding Assistance, homeowners whose primary homes were inspected and confirmed by FEMA or other recovery agencies to have been destroyed or sustained major damage are eligible for these funds.

Secondly, The Red Cross is supporting community-based recovery efforts through grants to more than 20 non-profit organizations in the county. Those non-profits devote their efforts to family services, behavioral health services to youth, repair of homes and recovery needs in the hardest-hit communities with lesser access to financial resources.

Lastly, The Red Cross launched an outreach enrollment campaign to homeowners who did not, or could not, register with FEMA. “We are doing this in coordination with community partners with strong relationships with underserved populations in the community,” said Van de Putte.

While the true extent of recovery is unknown, the efforts of long-term groups to serve the local community are evident as are their partnerships with national service organizations like The Red Cross.

“The Red Cross had a presence throughout Texas before Harvey struck, and we will be (here) for years to come, responding to home fires, flooding and future hurricanes and helping residents build more resilient communities,” said Van de Putte.

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To learn more about The American Red Cross, visit their website, Redcross.org
To learn more about the GCLTRG, to volunteer or give to the GCLTRG, visit:
www.galvestoncountyrecovers.org/

Galveston County Long Term Recovery Group (GCLTRG) is a collaborative network that addresses the long-term needs of Galveston County following a disaster. We are made up of representatives from non-profit, faith-based, and civic organizations and government and business partners working in our county.