

DISASTER RELIEF UPDATE – THREE DEPLOYMENTS AT HURRICANE RAVAGED GULF COAST

By Bob Grill, President of Disaster Aid USA; and Paul Mahata, Chair, District Disaster Relief Committee

Disaster Aid USA, in coordination with District 7620 Disaster Relief Committee, is now doing three deployments in Louisiana and Florida Panhandle to help the victims of Hurricanes Laura, Sally, and Delta. You may be aware that recently three strong hurricanes have badly impacted the Gulf Coast. The flooding and wind damage is significant, and dozens of lives have been lost. Disaster Aid USA has decided to deploy volunteers in affected areas, using rescue boats and disaster relief trailers with emergency equipment. DAUSA is working and coordinating with the Rotary district Governors in these states. We urge you to become a volunteer, if you can, or consider donating money individually or as a club. Here are the three current deployments.

1. Monroe, LA: North LA trailer deployed after Hurricane Laura passed. First stop, they were requested to help the Monroe Zoo with their chainsaw team. Secondly, the trailer has been in Alexandria, LA (middle of the state) for a month being utilized by Rotarians and the Baptist Student Union cutting trees in the area.

2. Lake Charles, LA: The trailers of Baker LA, Houston TX and Lake Charles LA have been deployed since Aug 27. Work consist of tarping roofs, chain sawing trees (mainly),

mucking and gutting houses, helping elderly move home furnishing to storage, digging water lines, digging ditches, clearing ditches, sandbagging, loaning our small AC window units, dehumidifiers and generators, buying gas for those in need, buying food for those in need, distributing food, water hygiene kits, and distributing 3-ply surgical and KN95 masks.

We have rented a Kubota tractor with a front bucket and backhoe attachment. It has worked almost every day hauling debris and large logs to the FEMA piles, pushing large debris piles, digging up stumps, repairing fence, hauling roofing materials, house debris, etc. We were usually asked to go to the toughest or most damaged house in the beginning due to having equipment. We received donations from survivors whose houses we worked on, a church and the Rotary District 6200 have also paid for it.

3. Panhandle of Florida: Hurricane Sally required part of the team working in Lake Charles to break off to go and train Rotarians in Pensacola (FL) due to its damage. DAUSA DART Arthur Hodge of Florida brought their trailer and a 30kw generator and met the trainers. This area seemed to have more flood damage.

All three areas are still under deployment. Hurricane Delta came thru Lake Charles (LA). It had a path to hit LA as a CAT3. With almost every house tarped due to roof damage by

Hurricane Laura, and all the ditches clogged with piled up debris waiting for FEMA to clear, Delta caused massive flooding, and became more catastrophic for the area. Rotarians from Monroe and Baton Rouge provided a logistical support for our teams delivering gas, ice, supplies and taking broken equipment out of the area for repair and hand delivering it back. These were invaluable services that kept us working under tough conditions.

Disaster Aid USA welcomes all able-bodied volunteers (male and female, young and old, experienced and inexperienced). Please visit our website: disasteraidusa.org. Read who we are and see what we do and have done over the last 10 years. We are asking that you consider clicking on the PayPal button and making a donation individually or as a club. Your donation will be used to provide aid and assistance to the victims of Hurricanes Laura, Sally, and Delta, as they rebuild their lives and homes. Alternately, you can mail a check to: Disaster Aid USA, 9817 Lanham Severn Road, Lanham, MD 20706. Also, there is an option for donating money through Network for Good.

<https://disasteraidusa.networkforgood.com/projects/107762-hurricane-laura-2020>

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