

Greetings from the Gulf Coast

Thank you for your interest in serving the victims of Hurricane Katrina!

Lutheran Disaster Response, a collaborative ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, has established volunteer housing sites at Lutheran churches in the New Orleans area and across the Mississippi Gulf Coast. These sites are:

Atonement Lutheran Church  
6500 Riverside Dr  
Metairie, LA 70003

Christ the King Lutheran Church  
1001 West Esplanade Ave.  
Kenner, LA 70065

Hosanna Lutheran Church  
2480 Highway 190  
Mandeville, LA 70448

Lamb of God Lutheran Church  
57210 Allen Rd  
Slidell, LA 70461

Monte de los Olivos Lutheran Church  
4105 David Dr  
Metairie, LA 70003

Peace Lutheran Church  
1320 Gause Blvd W  
Slidell, LA 70460

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
2004 Pass Rd  
Biloxi, MS 228-388-5767

These sites vary in capacity and accommodations. Atonement and Lamb of God are "Tent City" sites that can house up to 100 volunteers. Good Shepherd can house 250+ . The sleeping accommodations are "barracks" style in large tents (we're working on getting heat into them). A camp "chef" prepares morning and evening meals. The camps are equipped with shower trailers and portable toilets. The work for all sites are currently coordinated from Atonement and Lamb of God in New Orleans and Good Shepherd and Bethel in Biloxi, Mississippi

Christ the King, Hosanna, "Monte," and Peace offer indoor housing with a variety of sleeping accommodations. Christ the King and Monte use cots, Hosanna uses air mattresses, and Peace offers bunk beds. All sites have showers and provide meals, also in a variety of fashions.

Accommodations, for the most part, are assigned by a “first come first served” basis; however, the size of your group and the skill level of your group may also be determining factors. Additionally, there are existing partnerships between church bodies which we also attempt to accommodate.

The remainder of this document consists of a dozen “Frequently Asked Questions” which we hope you will find informative.

Once you’ve read through these FAQs, and you have more questions or you are ready to proceed with your plans to volunteer in Louisiana, reply to this email ([lavols@yahoo.com](mailto:lavols@yahoo.com)). If you prefer to volunteer in Mississippi please contact [campbiloxi@cableone.net](mailto:campbiloxi@cableone.net).

## **HURRICANE CLEAN-UP AND RECOVERY VOLUNTEERS’ FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (F.A.Q.)**

### **1) Introduction (who we are and what we are doing).**

Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) is a collaborative ministry of the [Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#) (ELCA) and [The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod](#) (LCMS). Following a major domestic disaster, LDR seeks to minister to the urgent needs of those most in need, regardless of faith or creed.

The volunteer coordination effort of Lutheran Disaster Response in Louisiana has been to help establish and operate volunteer sites to facilitate the out pouring of volunteers from all over the country into areas where people need help. The early focus has been on the tremendous need to clean out flooded homes and to open up wind-torn neighborhoods. Skilled volunteers have been connected with rebuilding projects which include drywall installation, roof repair, and various construction jobs.

LDR is working toward a concerted recovery effort called “Katrina Aid Today” in partnership with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR - see [Story](#) for details). In this effort, LDR will continue to coordinate volunteers through a system of “Case Management” designed to minimize competition for relief resources. (see <http://qbgm-umc.org/umcor/news/20051005.cfm> for more on Case Management)

### **2) What is the age limit for volunteers?**

We do not have a "maximum age" limit, but the volunteer will need to be in good health and able to handle the demands of the work they will be doing. The "minimum age" is 16 due to potential hazards involved in the clean-up and recovery efforts.

### **3) Do I need any shots before I volunteer?**

All clean-up volunteers should have an updated Tetnus shot (no more than 10 years since their last Tetnus shot). Check with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to see what they say about further vaccinations. <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/index.asp>

### **4) What exactly will we be doing?**

The types of work volunteers can expect to be assigned range from:

- Tree removal, general clean up of fallen limbs, trash, etc.
- Removal of: furniture and personal belongings; mud/sludge; and drywall
- Spraying/applying mold retardant
- Drywall installation and painting
- Some electrical and plumbing installation
- Rebuilding homes in various stages of restoration

We strive to match the skills of a team with the work they can do best. What we need most are volunteers who are in good physical condition and willing to work hard at whatever task needs to be done. Much of the work is "pretty nasty"...but we do need skilled laborers (tree-removal, dry-wall, roofers, and other construction worker) and the need for skilled home repair workers is increasing daily. There are also jobs in the volunteer camps such as preparing and serving meals and other general camp maintenance and odd jobs ( things like putting together wheelbarrows, etc.)

### **5) Where do we report to when we arrive?**

You will be assigned a volunteer site and put in contact with your camp coordinator. They will provide you with all the information that you will need to find the camp and instructions on what to do when you get there.

### **6) Should we bring our own tools/equipment? If so, what?**

It is helpful if volunteers can provide some of their own tools and equipment. All volunteers need to wear steel-toe or other tough and sturdy work shoes. All volunteers should also bring (and use daily) an insect repellent that contains DEET or picardin. Your local site coordinator will be able to give you more information about what you will need. But in general...**Volunteers doing "muck-outs"** should each have: a respirator (one with a HEPA filter is best, but any "twin cartridge" respirator should suffice. If you will be working for more than a week, replacement cartridges would be good to bring), eye protection glasses, and industrial strength rubber gloves. Rubber boots may also be needed in some clean-ups. It may also be worthwhile for volunteers to bring a one-use paint suit for each day they will be working (can be purchased for about \$6 a piece at hardware stores or paint stores, one with a hood is good. If the suit doesn't have a hood, some other sort of head covering will be needed).

Other tools that are useful for this job include: utility knife, nail puller, hammer, flat shovel, straight hoe, wheelbarrow (or garden cart), cordless (battery operated) screwdriver, and duct tape.

**Volunteers doing tree-removal** need: eye protection glasses, hard hats, leather gloves, ear plugs, chainsaw chaps, chainsaws (with spare chains and other parts and necessary supplies), rakes, and wheelbarrows.

**Volunteers doing drywalling and rebuilding** need hammers, and all other tools and supplies needed for drywall installation or the other rebuilding work you will be doing.

### **7) Will we be able to buy food and water for ourselves or should we bring everything that we will need for the time we will be there?**

You do not need to bring all your own food. The volunteer camps are serving breakfast and dinner (supper to some of you). Additionally, there are grocery stores open again, so you can buy what you need when you get down here.

**8) Will there be electricity to plug in my cell phone for recharging?**

There is electricity where volunteers are staying, but there may not be enough outlets for everyone to charge their phone every night. It may be best to plan to charge your phone in your car.

**9) What should the volunteer group expect the typical day to be like?**

Cleaning up after a hurricane is hard work! A team should plan to work eight hours each day, and get really dirty doing it. Traffic is bad. Flexibility is an appreciated quality!

**10) Are electricity, cell phone service, gasoline, and sanitary services a reality in the area or are services still intermittent/sporadic?**

In general, yes. Your local site coordinator will be able to give you specific information about what will be available where you will be working and living.

**11) What sort of weather can I expect (temperature, etc)?**

It's been pretty chilly in the evenings, and "sweatshirt" weather during the day. Please check out <http://www.weather.gov/> for the latest weather conditions and forecast.

**12) If we are able, are there supplies that we should bring for area residents, such as food, clothing, building materials, etc.?**

First, whatever you do, please DO NOT BRING ANY CLOTHES for area residents. If you have collected clothing, please find a charity in your area that can use them. The South has been flooded with donations of clothing and we do not need any more! But thanks anyway. In terms of other supplies, when we assign your site, we will be able to tell you if there are any specific supply needs that you might be able to fill when you come down. Your local site coordinator may also be able to give you a list of needed supplies that you could bring with you. If you want to do a collection, contact us for a specific item or two that you can collect and bring with you. The "needs" list changes so rapidly that we cannot even guess what might be most useful more than a week from now.