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CITY OF NILES

PressRelease

City Thanks Volunteers for Help with Flood Clean-up

NILES, March 5, 2018 16:00 hours – For Immediate Release

On Friday March 2 and Saturday March 3, 2018 nearly 150 volunteers helped area homeowners, businesses and the City with the first wave of flood related clean-up efforts. Volunteers ranged in age from 10 to 70 years of age and came from all over the region to help. The clean-up included the filling of twenty-one (21), thirty (30) yard dumpsters with debris and destroyed household and personal belongings.

City Administrator, Ric Huff stated, “the volume of support has been amazing; we are very thankful that so many people are willing to jump in and help wherever needed.” With support from the Salvation Army, who provided localized nutrition and hydration stations for volunteers, the Southeastern Berrien County Landfill who provided half price dumpsters for use by the City in the clean-up efforts, United Way of Southwest Michigan who helped coordinate volunteers and donations and the Berrien County Emergency Operations Command’s leadership, groups of volunteers from Andrews University, Niles New Tech, United Way, the Niles Daily Star, several local churches, the City of Niles Wastewater Treatment Plant, the City of Niles Utilities Department, the City of Niles Street Department, the City of Niles Fire Department, the City of Niles Police Department, the City of Niles Dial-a-Ride Transportation Department, and the City’s Parks and Recreation Board and the City’s Community Development Department, helped over two dozen homeowners and several business owners clean-up flood related damage.

Starting this week, the Berrien County EOC in coordination with the United Way are working with National relief organizations like Team Rubicon to start providing no cost assistance to homeowners needing assistance with additional abatement and muck out needs in the affected homes. Team Rubicon can be reached through by calling the United Way 211 help line.

Additional help can be sought from the group Crisis Clean Up by calling 800-451-1954. Crisis Clean Up can cut/remove drywall, insulation, flooring, furniture, appliances, etc. All services are free, but service is not guaranteed due to the overwhelming need. Importantly, this hotline CANNOT assist with social services like food, clothing, shelter, insurance, or questions about FEMA registration. Volunteers work free of charge and provide the tools and equipment necessary to complete the work.

International Disaster Emergency Service offers 12x8 storage sheds in disaster areas. They are for property owners to store their personal items in while their homes are being assessed and repaired. Anyone needing a storage shed should call Fairland Christian Church at 269-683-8211.

United Way will continue to accept funds, where 100% will go directly to disaster relief assistance. Anyone needing cleaning supplies, relief kits, etc. should make sure they call 211 and request these items. Those with immediate needs (clothes, food, gas cards, etc.) should call 211 or Neighbor to Neighbor at 269-471-7411.

Cash and donated household items are still needed and can be provided by going to <http://www.uwsm.org/relief> and clicking the donate items button. There donors can log what they have to donate and the United Way will create a detailed listing. United Way's Volunteer Engagement Manager, Julee Laurent, says "This listing will streamline referrals for getting donated items out to people who need it most."

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