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 **Tropical Storm Isaias Recovery**

 **Eastwick Neighborhood**

**Group Leaders’ Guide**



**Contact us at:**

**IsaiasRecoveryVolunteers@gmail.com**

**or visit**

**https://www.ucc.org/volunteer/disaster\_disaster-volunteers/**

**WELCOME**

Thank you for your participation in the Tropical Storm Isaias Recovery response project. Your willingness to engage in this experience allows you to walk with others as they rebuild their lives, and in doing that, share the gifts, talents and resources you bring. Disaster recovery puts you into the midst of disruption of various intensities. These experiences may move you out of yourcomfort zone and prompt you to ask new questions and seek deeper responses.

We hope that this resource will help you prepare for your experience and will empower you for continued commitment and involvement in disaster response and recovery when you return home.

**YOUR PURPOSE**

In the midst of this wide-ranging work of working with and being with people and communities in the wake of disaster, work groups serve an integral and particular role. Volunteer groups help provide safe housing for people who have been dramatically affected by the disaster. Volunteers assist people as they begin to reclaim their lives and communities and to recover their identities. As outside groups, we do not determine how a community should recover. Volunteers do not go to “fix things,” but to accompany people in their recovery, one group and one week at a time.

Following a disaster, those affected are often left feeling disempowered. Destruction and loss surround them. Systems of obtaining assistance often offer the affected person few choices. Insurance is often not available. Emergency food, clothing, and shelter meet the needs of the moment, but do not empower people to meet their own needs. Someone who has been affected by disaster often feels out of control.

Disaster recovery mission groups assist people and communities to reclaim whatever part of their lives is possible. Some groups may meet the family or person in the home where they are working and listen to their stories. Other groups may not meet the homeowner in person for a variety of reasons related to that person’s life-situation following the disaster. Often, the trauma of disaster makes it psychologically difficult for a person/family to participate in the physical clean up or in the repair of their home. In each of these situations, groups have the opportunity to be a presence that demonstrates companionship as people and communities engage in the arduous task of rebuilding their lives.

How to Work with Your Hosts (From *Getting Dirty for Jesus!* 2005, pp, 14, and 7-8):

Always remember that you are guests and servants. Thinking about how guests act when they visit someone’s home is helpful as you enter into someone else’s “home”. Your attitude of servanthood is also helpful as you work together with your hosts. Try to serve “with” and not “for” your hosts. There may be some we serve who look prosperous and whose homes seem fine. Please be assured that each home is selected based on immediate need. We are present simply to meet this need.

Remember whose disaster it is. Do not expect those who have just had their lives destroyed by a disaster to be able to accommodate you immediately. They will have limitations, and governmental paperwork often works against their “speedy” recovery. Be patient. Sometimes, just your presence in those times of pain is enough.

Don’t expect a “sense of completion”. Part of the power of the trip will be the realization that there is still much to be done to right the wrongs in this world…and your work helps along the journey. We are not in Eastwick to achieve perfection. We are present to help people achieve some progress in their recovery effort.

The construction manager for the Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG) will provide you with a scope of work for each household. However, there may be other tasks that the homeowner wishes to be accomplished. These items should be coordinated with the LTRG’s construction manager and/or lead case manager.

When You Return Home:

The real testimony of your experience is just beginning. At home, you can continue to reflect on the experience and make choices about how you live differently because of the experience. At home, you have the opportunity to share stories of your experience to help others remember the continuing disaster and long-term recovery. At home, you have the opportunity to engage in actions that aid disaster preparedness in your community and to become advocates for legislative actions that address the wide spread recovery still necessary for Eastwick. At home you can be one person with knowledge and experience to educate your community about our sisters and brothers in Eastwick.

The first step in advocacy is discerning what local communities want those from outside the region to advocate with them. Advocacy also includes looking at your own local community with new eyes, seeing if these concerns are present, taking action.

**THE STORM**

During the pandemic, on August 4, 2020, Tropical Storm Isaias dumped seven inches of rain on parts of eastern Pennsylvania. Wind damage and tornadoes left hundreds of thousands without power; widespread severe flooding led to injuries and one storm-related fatality. Recovery efforts related to the storm are continuing even while the world continues to grapple with the difficulties of the pandemic.

Damage in Pennsylvania was concentrated in southern Chester County, the greater Darby region of Delaware County, the Eastwick neighborhood of Philadelphia, and Lehigh and Northampton Counties.

While there are unmet needs being addressed across these impacted areas, the Eastwick section of Philadelphia has the highest concentration of damage to both structures and mechanical systems including heating systems and hot water heaters. There are also significant environmental concerns remaining primarily attributed to mold.

Many of the impacted residents are elderly, have medical conditions, and/ or significant exacerbating circumstances. Water covered several feet in many of the homes; to this day some still require cleanouts and mold remediation. There remains an urgent need for air handlers to provide heat and hot water heaters. This is complicated by a multitude of factors. Many of the residents did not have flood insurance. Early interviews with survivors revealed that it was not disclosed to some homeowners at the time of sale that their properties were in a flood zone. Other families owned their homes outright and elected not have homeowners or flood insurance since they did not have a lender that required coverage. Another common theme that emerged was that residents spent their limited funds on their deductibles resulting in financial hardship or in some cases could not cover their deductible. Along a similar vein, some of the survivors have gone into significant credit card debt to pay for urgent home repairs; they do not have the means to repay these loans as many in the area are at or just above the poverty level.

In addition to the most extreme cases, there are many families that need washers, dryers, and refrigerators. There are also needs for durable medical equipment including chair lifts. Renters have been forced to move out of the community to find affordable housing creating unreasonable commutes or the need to double up with family or friends as they have been unable to find affordable permanent housing. Case management is needed to assist these families as well.

**EASTWICK COMMUNITY INFORMATION**

From *History of Eastwick* by Carolyn Mosely, Eastwick United co-leader and EUNR Co-Chair

“Eastwick is a predominantly African-American community located in the lower [Southwest](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southwest_Philadelphia) portion in the City of [Philadelphia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philadelphia%2C_Pennsylvania). It is a product of a partially executed Urban Renewal Plan implemented in the early 1950's. Prior to the implementation of the Plan, Eastwick was inhabited by people of all races, religions, and national origins, most of whom harmoniously co-existed. Much of the original housing built before the 1950's lacked sewer service and other urban conveniences making it an ideal community for redevelopment. These conditions, consistent with the political agenda of the City government, paved the way for the implementation of the largest Urban Renewal project in the history of this country during that time. This effort resulted in the displacement of over 10,000 residents*, (including the family of Grammy Award Winning Songstress, Ms. Patti Labelle),* business and religious institutions promising the creation of a "New Philadelphia", a City within a City that would never come to fruition and, in its aftermath, leaving the scars of segregation, environmental contamination, sinking homes, flooding, closed schools, broken dreams and a field of weeds.”

Approximately two years ago, six community organizations came together to speak with one unified voice to effectively advocate for reparative justice thereby, creating Eastwick United (EU)**.**

Eastwick United members are working closely with residents to provide direct financial relief for flooded residents, to advocate for support from various disaster agencies (FEMA, PEMA, Philadelphia’s OEM L&I, and PWD), and to help guide residents through an opaque and confusing process to obtain resources to repair flooded homes. EU has been holding webinars with experts in architecture, landscape architecture, and civil engineering to explore possible long-term solutions for flood mitigation. EU is also advocating with Federal legislators to expedite funding for construction of a levee along Cobbs Creek to protect vulnerable residents who live in constant fear of the next flood.

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edited by Janet Zeis: February 7, 2021

**YOUR EASTWICK RECOVERY WORKTRIP SPECIFICS**

Housing:Along with following strict Covid guidelines on the worksites, the pandemic has also made it impossible for us to offer housing to volunteers. We are encouraging volunteers to commute from a radius of approximately 60 miles or, if coming from a greater distance, to make their own housing arrangements in the area, and in so doing, keeping social distance requirements.

Cost: Cost will include your transportation, your food and accommodations (should you decide to stay overnight in the area).

Schedule: We welcome teams to work any day of the week (including weekends) and ask that you commit to at least two consecutive days of work. Our workdays begin at 8:00 at the staging area for assignments where you will assist in the loading of materials and tools. It is anticipated that the work day will end on site around 4:30pm, with an anticipated departure from the staging area around 5:00-5:30. As we move toward the longer days of late-Spring and early-Summer, the work day *may* extend later. This will be coordinated between the team leader and the construction manager. Regardless, at the end of each day, you *will* return to the staging area where you *will* assist with unloading materials, and sanitize any necessary tools / items for the following day. Single-day work teams are accepted, but not preferred.

Work and work teams: The work is repairing private homes in the Eastwick neighborhood, about 20 minutes from the staging area. Your group will be assigned work in one or more of the homes vetted by SEPA VOAD and partners. Many of the homes have structural damage and are without working heating systems and without hot water heaters. These are a priority and much of this work must be completed by licensed plumbers and electricians. We do not require that our volunteer teams be licensed, but if you have licensed team members, all the better!

Generally speaking, volunteer work will be indoors and volunteers could be required to use ladders. You may be gutting homes, framing, drywalling (walls and ceilings), replacing damaged flooring, painting; replacing doors and windows, and installing finish trim.

We are looking for work teams of 2 to 5 members aged 18 and up.  Each team must have a skilled (construction) team leader and one semi-skilled member, the remaining members do not need to be experienced.

We suggest volunteers prepare packed lunches and take plenty of water in re-fillable water bottles for each day. We also ask that you bring a substantial first aid kit and general carpentry tools.

Please dress for construction work; we prefer that you wear work boots and definitely, *no open-toed shoes, sandals, flip-flops, etc*. ). If you have your own personal protective equipment, please bring it. We may supply protective gear as needed (hard hats, masks, gloves, protective suits). If you can bring a truck, all the better. That will help us move building materials between the staging area and the worksites.

**Covid Guidelines: We require that volunteers wear facemasks, practice social distancing and sanitize on a regular basis. Windows and doors will be kept open on each worksite for ventilation. Further information is provided in our registration packet.**

Forms: We will email registration forms once you are certain you are coming. Please have each group member complete all forms and email them to the address on the form at least three weeks before your arrival date. Each person on the work team MUST have an up-to-date Tetanus shot. We will also send medical forms, not to be returned to us, but to be held by the leader of your group in case of emergency.

Donations are deductible and are always welcome: It is estimated that $320,000 will be required to meet the needs of the Eastwick community. To date $48,500 has been committed from the following organizations: Eastwick Neighbors and Friends Coalition, The Salvation Army, UCC Disaster Ministries, Lutheran Disaster Response – Eastern PA, and a local Go Fund Me effort. Please earmark ‘Eastwick Recovery’ and send donations to Eastwick Unmet Needs Roundtable at:

St. Paul AME Church Ellwood
8398 Lindbergh Blvd.
Philadelphia, PA  19153

**It is suggested you bring:**

❏ Work gloves and a pair of safety glasses.

❏ Suitable work boots.

❏ Old jeans/long pants - work clothes

❏ Water/Sport Bottle

❏ Personal medications

❏ Cell Phone/charger

❏ Camera (do not take pictures of residents without their permission and do not post pictures online without written consent)

❏ Your lunch and water

❏ A standard First Aid Kit for the group

 Consider including:

 (20) adhesive bandages, various sizes.

 (1) 5" x 9" sterile dressing.

 (1) conforming roller gauze bandage.

 (2) triangular bandages.

 (2) 3 x 3 sterile gauze pads.

 (2) 4 x 4 sterile gauze pads.

 (1) roll 3" cohesive bandage.

 (2) germicidal hand wipes or waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

 (6) antiseptic wipes.

 (2) pair large medical grade non-latex gloves.

 Adhesive tape, 2" width.

 Anti-bacterial ointment.

 Cold pack.

 Scissors (small, personal).

 Tweezers

 CPR breathing barrier, such as a face shield.

Non-Prescription Drugs: aspirin or non-aspirin pain reliever, anti-diarrhea medication, antacid (for stomach upset), syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the Poison Control Center), laxative, activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center), cortisone cream, Benadryl.

**Area Information:**

Hospitals near Eastwick (check Google Maps):

* Mercy Catholic Medical Center

Mercy Fitzgerald Campus

1500 Landsdown Avenue

Darby, PA

610-237-4000

Churches in the area (check Google Maps):

* St. Paul AME Church Ellwood
8398 Lindbergh Blvd.
* Eastwick United Methodist Church

Lindbergh Blvd

Restaurants:

There are numerous restaurants and grocery stores located in the Eastwick area