

# Extreme weather puts letter carriers at risk

**E**very region of the United States is vulnerable to natural disasters, as this year's events demonstrate. Wildfires in the West, floods and tornadoes in the Midwest, tropical storms drenching the South—letter carriers across the country live under the threat of disasters like these.

In May, an outbreak of deadly tornadoes spread across the Midwest. More than 300 tornadoes were reported, 18 at Level Three and two at Level Four on the Enhanced Fujita (EF) scale. The tornadoes added to the region's misery—major floods impacted the Midwest through the spring and summer. In September, Tropical Storm Imelda dumped up to 40 inches of rain on the Beaumont, TX, area, soaking a region still recovering from Hurricane Harvey's devastation in 2017.

Currently, reports from Beaumont and surrounding areas are still coming in. The NALC Disaster Relief Foundation executed a relief mission to Beaumont, TX, and continue to identify and assist the impact to letter carriers affected by Imelda. Whenever and wherever disaster strikes, NALC members across the country have stepped up for their brothers and sisters in need by donating cash, uniforms and other assistance. The NALC created the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation in 2018 to make it easier for this help to reach carriers in need. Many branches had asked NALC to establish a mechanism for donations, supplies and other assistance so that carriers affected by disasters could receive help faster and more effectively.

At the 2018 national convention in Detroit, NALC President Fredric Rolando announced the formation of the Foundation, which then moved quickly to set up systems to accept

donations, distribute grants to those in need and build a volunteer network.

"The NALC Disaster Relief Foundation reflects the will of the members, who have asked for a way to help their fellow carriers quickly and efficiently," Rolando said.

The Disaster Relief Foundation accepts donations from individual letter carriers, branches and state associations, as well as other sources. Donations should be sent to NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144. The foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and your contribution may be eligible for a tax deduction. It is recommended that you seek further advice from your tax advisor.

All donations from letter carriers, branches and state associations go directly to letter carriers who need assistance—no administrative costs are deducted.

The Foundation recently published a *Member's Guide* to help letter carriers prepare for disasters, donate to the Foundation to help others and obtain assistance if they are affected by a disaster. The *Member's Guide*, the applications for grants and other information are available on the Foundation's website at [nalc.org/disaster](http://nalc.org/disaster).

Grants are provided for property damage sustained to a member's primary residence, automobiles or personal property from events such as, but not limited to, hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, wildfires, earthquakes or severe storms. Any NALC regular



## NALC Disaster Relief Foundation

**Make a donation by sending a check or money order to NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.**

member who has faced hardship as a result of a natural disaster can apply for assistance by completing the Application for Relief Grant. The eligibility requirements are outlined in the application. The Foundation's board of directors will consider the applications and will issue grants on an objective basis to eligible individuals as funds are available and as defined in the *Member's Guide*. Members do not have to wait for emergency relief or insurance claims to be settled to apply. Applications must be received no later than 120 days after the date when the natural disaster occurred, unless the applicant can provide sufficient reasons for a delay.

NALC is in the process of creating response teams throughout the country. The teams and volunteers will receive disaster relief training. The volunteers will provide relief assistance and, if needed, emotional support, and will bring basic supplies such as food, water and uniforms to disaster areas.

"The generosity of letter carriers never ceases to amaze me," President Rolando said. "We hope that the foundation will become an invaluable lifeline for our sisters and brothers in need, in the true spirit of solidarity." **PR**