



TO: Volunteer Work Teams: Bastrop County Wildfire

FROM: Faith Village, Smithville, TX

Thank you for your commitment to assist in rebuilding and recovery work generated by the Texas Wildfires. The work of your team will be very rewarding. Volunteer teams bring a renewed sense of hope to the affected populations.

Representatives from the Episcopal, Presbyterian, United Methodist, and Baptist Churches are working together to manage **Faith Village** on the grounds of First Baptist Church, Smithville, TX.

Enclosed is information for you to share with your team. Please provide each team member with a copy of documents when appropriate. We want to prepare all of you to participate in a volunteer village and to have a meaningful experience in Central Texas; therefore it is important that all members of the team become familiar with this information. Completing the required forms prior to arrival at the village is imperative.

Please be mindful that you may be working under adverse conditions with respect to climate and terrain. This recovery process is a work in progress, so "flexible" is the word to start each day.

You are embarking on what will be a memorable experience. Give what you are able to, take time to rest and reflect, and pray for each other and your mission. Please take time to listen to the stories of the area residents, remembering that your presence means as much as your work.

May God richly bless you with understanding, courage, and compassion.

Faith Village

IMPORTANT Information

New Policies for Youth Volunteering in Bastrop County

Decisions have been made by the **Bastrop Long Term Recovery Team** in conjunction with some of the faith communities and we have agreed on the following policies for the safety of youth visiting the area.

Basically,

16-18 ages can work on a rebuild site.

14-16 ages will work on secondary sites that will include fences and ramps.

12-14 ages will work with American Youth Works on environmental projects or other work as determined and assigned by Margery Marshall.

All youth coming to the area will have to be in a ratio of **1-6 with adults**.

At rebuild sites there will be **crew leaders** who will supervise work and safety.

All youth staying at **Faith Village** or at the **SISD Middle School** will have a liability waiver form signed by their parents **BEFORE** they are allowed to stay in the village. The BCLTRT liability waiver form will also be pre-signed by parents.

We hope none of this will affect your coming to Bastrop County to help with the rebuild. We need your help.

If you have any questions with regard to these policies please direct questions to gillkeyworth@aol.com or alanford@austin.rr.com

Each Volunteer Team should bring:

- First Aid Kit for your team
(These are available at your local American Red Cross Chapter office.)

Individual Volunteers should bring:

BRING YOUR COMPLETED VOLUNTEER AND RELEASE FORM

Bedding

- Sleeping bag
- Flat sheets
- Pillow
- A light blanket

Clothing

- Socks and undergarments
- Clothing that can get VERY dirty and plastic bags for storage of dirty clothes
- Change of clothes at the end of the work day
- Heavy work boots (**steel-toed shoes are highly recommended**)
- Leather or heavy duty work gloves/light cotton gloves
- Rain gear
- Hat, visor, bandana and /or sweatband
- T-shirts or work shirts
- Long-sleeve shirts
- Jeans or pants and shorts
- Pajamas
- Shower shoes and robe

Toiletries

- Toothbrush/toothpaste
- Soap/shampoo
- Wet wipes
- Deodorant
- Personal medication for length of stay
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Razor/shaving cream)

Miscellaneous

- Bible
- Travel clock
- Fanny pack/backpack
- Spending money
- Water bottle
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight and extra batteries

Personal Items

- Towels/washcloths
- Chargers for electronic equipment
- Cameras
- Flash drives to share photos

What Not to Bring

- RVs and campers (there are no hookups or even parking space for these large vehicles)
- Tents
- Alcohol or weapons

Pre-Mission Trip Checklist

Before arriving, **each team member should:**

- **BEFORE LEAVING** give the team leader an assessment of your skills as outlined in the “**Skills Assessment Form**”. It is critical that the team leader send a compiled form to disasterresponse@umcad.org. The form then will be forwarded it to your village’ manager and site manager. The jobs that the team members can successfully complete may then be determined prior to your arrival.
- Complete the General Release Agreement.
- We recommend each team member have an up-to-date tetanus shot in the event of any injury.
- Review the orientation manual and ask that the team leader seek answers to any questions from the Housing Coordinator or the Village Manager.
- If flying, consider purchasing travel insurance in the event of a hurricane or natural disaster that may cause you to change your plans.
- If flying, arrange to rent vehicles large enough to accommodate your team and the provided tools you will be transporting to the work site. If driving, please remember to take this into consideration.
- Team members who have experienced serious illness or have heart problems or diabetes should check with a doctor to insure that they are healthy enough to volunteer. **Weather in Central Texas is temperamental and at times can be extremely hot. Physical labor (plus the stress of living in primitive conditions) can accelerate the onset of heatstroke or aggravate other pre-existing conditions.**

Important: The work teams will be coming to a relatively warm climate in an area that has severe fire and some flood damage. Please note, however, as you gather supplies based on the following list, you may need to modify some items as the weather cools. Thunderstorms and heavy showers occur all year round, so you may be very happy that you packed your rain gear.