

**William P. Robertson**  
**Acting Director**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **DOs and DON'Ts of DISASTER DONATIONS**

### ***Unsolicited donations often become the “Second Disaster”***

SPRINGFIELD – The tornadoes that struck Christian County on December 1 have tugged at the heartstrings of many local communities and interest groups. While there is no doubt that the affected communities will have a long road to recovery, state and local officials have an urgent warning for those who are currently collecting donations for tornado survivors.

“Words cannot express our gratitude for the generosity of our friends and neighbors in this time of need,” said Taylorville mayor, Bruce Barry. “But at this time, please refrain from sending unsolicited items such as toys, clothes or other materials. The time will come when these items are needed, but at this time our critical need is for monetary donations.”

The flood of unsolicited donations, despite repeat requests for cash, is what disaster relief groups often call “the second disaster.” Mass deliveries of donations require agencies to redirect valuable resources away from the critical core life-safety missions for donation management. Monetary donations allow the most flexibility in obtaining timely resources and pumps cash into the local economy that helps strengthen a community.

Following a disaster, many people express interest in helping those impacted by the event. Acting IEMA Director William Robertson suggests it is best to volunteer time or money through a reputable disaster relief organization. The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster ([www.nvoad.org](http://www.nvoad.org)) maintains a national database of voluntary and charitable organizations involved in a variety of activities, including emergency preparedness and response throughout the nation.

“When a disaster strikes, voluntary organizations help people in their community, region or across the country,” said Robertson. “Volunteer organizations play a vital role in ensuring the long-term recovery of a community affected by a disaster.”

A Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) has been established to assign volunteers 18 years of age and older with a task that can help the affected community. The VRC will mobilize at the Taylorville Township Building (1620 W. Spresser Street) on Wednesday, December 5 through Sunday, December 9 from 9:00

a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Christian County will provide additional volunteer information as the recovery process continues via a pre-recorded message. That number is 217-370-3891.

For those looking to make a monetary donation, Missions for Taylorville will be the only outlet collecting for this disaster relief effort.

Missions for Taylorville  
c/o City Hall  
115 North Main Street  
Taylorville, IL 62568

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