

Why is it critical to only send well-trained Early Response teams into disaster areas?

Trained teams:

- Learn during training how to be a Christian presence to those affected. Sometimes listening and loving are the most important jobs to be done.
- know how to take steps to prevent further damage to a family's personal property without jeopardizing the survivor's eligibility for assistance from FEMA and/or insurance
  - this work includes tarping, debris removal, etc.
- only make promises that can be kept under the conditions and time limits and without assigning a promise for someone else to keep
- respond with sensitivity to the needs of the survivors
- do no harm
- are self-sufficient and do not cause a burden on the area by having needs of their own that take away from the needs of the survivors and community
- don't invade the privacy of survivors
- leave after about 3 days of work to avoid burn out and fatigue
- are flexible
- always have an invitation to the area prior to going to a disaster site
- don't use chainsaws unless specifically trained on using them after a disaster. Trees in a disaster react differently than trees in ordinary situations
- know about safety issues, preparation and equipment
- follow safe sanctuaries policies and have current background checks
- have the proper credentials, including a special badge with a picture, for being in disaster areas
- have updated vaccinations, especially tetanus, and hepatitis if required
- are ready *before* a disaster strikes!
- and so much more

Trained teams are always needed *before* a disaster strikes so they are ready to go at a moment's notice. Your church can have a disaster team training event. Contact Amelia Fletcher at (251) 978-8384