

# SUPERSTORM SANDY

TWO-YEAR UPDATE | OCTOBER 2014



**American  
Red Cross**

## A Message From the President and CEO



Two years ago, Superstorm Sandy made landfall in the Northeast, battering many of our nation's largest metropolitan communities and disrupting countless lives. Thanks to our generous donors, the American Red Cross launched its largest disaster response in more than five years—providing food, shelter and critical relief items in the wake of the storm.

In addition to helping provide immediate assistance, our donors have supported long-term recovery efforts in the years that have followed—which allowed families to start over in a new place, enabled others to return to their homes and provided financial help and guidance to people working to put their lives back together.

As of August 31, the Red Cross had received \$311.5 million in donations for Sandy emergency relief and recovery efforts, and we have spent or committed more than 99 percent of these funds over the course of two years. We are dedicating the remaining funds to provide affected families with financial assistance, housing repairs and mental health services, through both direct Red Cross support and grants to partners helping Sandy survivors.

The Red Cross response to Sandy was powered by the dedication of more than 17,000 disaster workers—90 percent of them volunteers—who came from every state, sacrificing time with their families over the holidays and selflessly helping people get through some of the toughest situations imaginable.

As a native of the New York and New Jersey area, I was deeply affected by my visits to devastated communities in the days and weeks after Sandy made landfall. But in the last two years, I have been filled with hope by the countless people I've met who embody resiliency and a desire to rebuild.

One woman whose story continues to inspire me is 95-year-old Viola Lynch. During Sandy, Viola and her daughter lost their home in southern New Jersey as well as all of their belongings. I met Viola in early 2013 and was immediately struck by her wit, good humor and overwhelming positivity in the face of adversity. For me, Viola came to personify the resilient spirit of Sandy survivors. Today, with Red Cross assistance, she and her daughter are thriving in their new home.

We have done much to assist people in piecing their lives back together in Sandy's aftermath. But needs from the storm still remain as communities continue to rebuild, and the Red Cross will be there to lend a helping hand thanks to the impactful support of our donors.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gail McGovern".

Gail McGovern

## Generous Donors Fuel a Massive Red Cross Response

In late October 2012, 900-mile-wide Superstorm Sandy came ashore near Atlantic City, N.J., having already pummeled Puerto Rico and an extensive swath of the East Coast. Sandy's strong winds, torrential rains and flooding caused 117 deaths in the United States, including 53 in New York and 34 in New Jersey, and forced hundreds of thousands of people from their homes.

The devastating storm brought widespread destruction and heartbreaking loss across New Jersey and New York, the two hardest-hit states, as well as to communities in Connecticut, West Virginia and Maryland. And in its aftermath, millions of people turned to the Red Cross for help and hope in their darkest hours.

Starting even before Sandy's landfall, Red Cross staff and volunteers moved quickly to bring relief, opening shelters and then feeding sites that provided more than 74,000 overnight stays and more than 17 million meals and snacks.

Working from over 300 emergency response vehicles, Red Cross volunteers visited heavily damaged communities and neighborhoods, delivering food, blankets, health care, emotional support and critical relief supplies. And when the immediate needs of the response eventually receded, the Red Cross continued to help people recover, working with local governments and other nonprofits to ensure that Red Cross assistance was going where it was needed most.

## Red Cross Supports Recovery and Rebuilding, One Family at a Time

Over the past two years, Red Cross caseworkers and volunteers have worked hand-in-hand with nonprofit and local government partners to meet ongoing challenges and needs—family by family, neighbor by neighbor. On Staten Island, the two-bedroom bungalow of John and Laura Auer was flooded. “When my husband and son dragged me out, the water was up to my chest,” Laura Auer said. “When it was all said and done, it was way over my head.”

The Auer family met Red Cross case manager Chris Losavio, who promised to keep working until they found

the help they needed. “If it wasn't for Chris, I would not be home,” Auer said.

The Red Cross, in partnership with the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation and New York Disaster Interfaith Services, assisted the family both in making necessary repairs and in purchasing new furniture and appliances, enabling them to come home in June 2014. Losavio also organized co-workers from the Red Cross, who volunteered their own time to work with Tunnel to Towers to help with the repairs.

For the Auers, and thousands of other families with uncovered housing expenses, the Red Cross Move-in Assistance Program has served as a vital bridge to relocate from hotels to sustainable housing or complete repairs on their Sandy-damaged homes. The Move-in Assistance Program, the largest of several Red Cross programs and grants that have provided tens of millions of dollars in financial assistance overall to Sandy survivors, has provided more than \$32.2 million to more than 5,100 households, as of September 15, 2014.

The Auer family joins Red Cross case manager Chris Losavio in front of their home on Staten Island, N.Y. The Red Cross and partners, including the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation and New York Disaster Interfaith Services, helped repair the flooded house and provided new furniture and appliances so they could return home.





Red Crossers hang drywall at a Bergen County, N.J., home damaged by Superstorm Sandy, as part of Rebuilding Together's National Rebuilding Month.

A recovery effort of this scale is larger than any one organization, and the Red Cross has awarded grants totaling more than \$91 million to dozens of nonprofits with specialized expertise and strong local ties. These grants have supported a network of skilled, community-based services that can best meet Sandy survivors' needs for food, housing, financial help, mental health support and guidance.

The Red Cross has funded food banks in New York City, Long Island and New Jersey's Ocean and Monmouth Counties, helping feed families experiencing hardships due to Sandy's lingering impact. Another partner, Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), used an \$800,000 grant to purchase building materials and sustain their volunteers, who completed repair and rebuilding work on homes from New York to Maryland and West Virginia. And in New York this September, hundreds of Red Cross volunteers joined dozens of recovery partner groups in a full-scale hurricane exercise, helping us collectively strengthen community resilience.

A grant to our nonprofit partner Rebuilding Together helped restore many Sandy-damaged homes, including that of Ed and Lisa Abbate of Little Ferry, N.J. When Sandy swept ashore, the Abbates heard a loud crack as the back door of

their house gave way under the pressure of a sudden surge of water from the Hackensack River.

"It just started pouring in; it looked like Niagara Falls coming down the basement stairs," Ed said.

More than five feet of water flooded the basement, destroying the home's electrical panel, boiler and water heater. Their washer and dryer floated to the basement ceiling, and the storm's intense winds ripped away gutters and roofing, leaving two inches of water standing on the first floor and badly damaging the walls, insulation and wiring.

Last April, Red Cross North Jersey Region staff and board members joined more than 200 Rebuilding Together volunteers to repair the Abbates' home and other Sandy-damaged homes in Bergen County. "We appreciate all you have done and continue to do for us," Lisa told the volunteers.

The Red Cross has also provided \$10 million to support a New Jersey program that helps low-to-moderate income families bridge the gap between federal reconstruction grants and their rebuilding costs.

All of these grants—made possible by generous donor support to the Red Cross—are helping families keep food on their tables, repair their homes and get services to support them on the long road to recovery.

In addition, the Red Cross is helping ensure that services and financial assistance remain available to address the unmet recovery needs of Sandy-devastated communities. We are doing this by supporting long-term recovery groups composed of local community leaders, case managers, repair/rebuild organizations and partners offering mental health and other services.

Overall, the Red Cross has committed more than \$14 million to unmet needs roundtables and long-term recovery groups in the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut communities that experienced the greatest devastation from Sandy. Thanks to our donors, these groups will have the funds to continue helping affected communities with some of their most complex individual and family recovery needs.

**For more information on Red Cross recovery efforts, expenditures and grants to our partners, please visit our [Sandy Response page](#) on [redcross.org](#).**

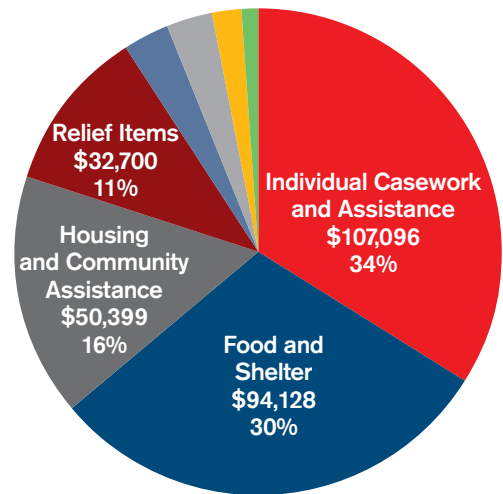
## Superstorm Sandy Expenses and Commitments\*\* Through August 31, 2014 – \$310M (of \$311.5M raised)

(in thousands)

- Disaster Vehicles, Equipment and Warehousing  
\$9,701, 3%
- Physical and Mental Health Services  
\$8,074, 3%
- Interagency Coordination  
\$5,517, 2%
- Community Resilience  
\$2,514, 1%

\*An average of 91 cents of every dollar the Red Cross spends is invested in humanitarian services and programs.

†These expenses include both direct services and support to other agencies.



## Thank You

Superstorm Sandy was the largest Red Cross operation in the U.S. in more than five years. We have been working in Sandy-affected communities since the storm hit, and we continue helping more people recover every day.

We are grateful for contributions from donors who responded with compassion to the devastation caused by Sandy; our partner nonprofits that work alongside us in the best interests of those in need; and our team of dedicated employees and volunteers who translate plans and resources into action.

We also appreciate our faithful corporate partners—Annual Disaster Giving Program and Disaster Responder members—and individuals who support disaster relief. Their generosity helped us respond even before Sandy made landfall. It also ensures we can prepare for, respond to and recover from tomorrow’s disasters, both those that affect millions and those that affect a single family or community.

Thank you. You have made, and continue to make, a difference in countless lives.