



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, April 27, 2006

CONTACT: Scott VanDeman

Director of Communications

Volunteer Florida

Phone: (850) 414-2974

Cell: (850) 251-2834

E-mail: scott@volunteerflorida.org

ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS!
PREPARE YOURSELVES FOR HURRICANE SEASON 2006,
THEN PREPARE TO HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS!

A “culture of preparedness” requires more than just stocking up on hurricane supplies; it requires knowledgeable volunteers to assist in disaster recovery ...

TALLAHASSEE – In conjunction with **Governor Jeb Bush’s** signing today of legislation authorizing Florida’s second annual 12-day sales tax holiday for hurricane preparedness, the **Governor’s Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, Volunteer Florida**, encourages every Floridian to remember that preparedness is not just stocking up on hurricane supplies.

Governor Bush has called on Floridians to unite in creating a “culture of preparedness,” and that includes getting ready to volunteer and help your neighbors after disaster strikes. All indications are that we will have another active hurricane season, and volunteers are essential to a successful response.

“In this period of increased tropical activity, it is vital for all Floridians to prepare,” said Governor Bush. “Families and businesses that prepare are safer and recover quicker than those who don’t plan and don’t take action.”

Among the most important ways to take action is to volunteer! Throughout the year, many experienced disaster relief agencies, as well as faith and community-based organizations, provide training to potential disaster recovery volunteers in order to ensure their efforts are maximized. Volunteer Florida urges all Floridians to get trained so they know exactly what to do when their assistance is needed most – in the aftermath of a hurricane.

"The sales tax holiday is the ideal time to prepare for the hurricane season," said **Volunteer Florida Chief Executive Officer Wendy Spencer**. "Of course we should all stock up on hurricane supplies and prepare a family disaster plan, but we also should contact a local faith or community-based organization about helping in disaster response. It's simple. Get supplies, establish your plan, and get trained to volunteer!"

(more)



Here is a list of just some of the disaster relief organizations that use volunteers to assist hurricane survivors:

American Red Cross (ARC)
www.redcross.org

Christian Contractors Association, Inc. (CCA)
www.ccaministry.org

Christian Disaster Response (CDR)
www.cdresponse.org

**Church World Service (CWS)
Community Crisis Support Team**
www.churchworldservice.org

Compassion Alliance
www.compassionalliance.org

**Corporation for National & Community Service
(CNS)**
www.nationalservice.org

Florida Association of Food Banks (FAFB)
www.fafb.org

Florida Association of Volunteer Centers (FAVC)
<http://www.floridavolunteercenters.org/>

Florida Baptist Disaster Relief
www.floridabaptistwitness.com

Florida Catholic Conference
www.flacathconf.org/donations.htm

Florida Conference of Seven Day Adventist
www.floridaconference.com

Florida Department of Elder Affairs (FDEA)
<http://elderaffairs.state.fl.us/>

**Florida Immediate Response Stress Team
(FIRST)**
www.unitedaromatherapy.org/first/

Florida Interfaith Networking in Disaster (FIND)
www.findflorida.org

Florida Jaycees (FJ)
www.fljaycees.org

Florida United Methodist Conference
www.flumc.org

**Florida Voluntary Organizations Active in
Disasters (FVOAD)**
www.flvoad.org

Lions of Florida
www.lionsofflorida.org

The Salvation Army (TSA)
www.salvationarmyusa.org

The United Way (UW)
www.uwof.org

In the spirit of the sales tax “holiday,” Spencer encourages community and faith-based organizations to start preparing now to assist needy hurricane survivors.

Financial gifts also are vitally important in the aftermath of a hurricane. Everyone is encouraged to make a contribution, no matter how small, first to the disaster-relief organization of their choice, then to the Florida Hurricane Relief Fund, which is administered by the Volunteer Florida Foundation. Visit the fund’s Web site at www.flahurricanefund.org.

The 2006 Atlantic Hurricane Season begins June 1. For more information about volunteering in disasters, and links to disaster relief organizations and other volunteer resources, visit Volunteer Florida’s Web sites at www.volunteerflorida.org and www.volunteerfloridadisaster.org.

The Governor’s Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service was established in 1994 by the Florida Legislature to administer grants under the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993. The Commission grants funds to Florida AmeriCorps and National Service programs; encourages volunteerism for everyone from youths to seniors to people with disabilities; promotes volunteerism in emergency management and preparedness; and helps to strengthen and expand Volunteer Centers in Florida.

