

Operation Blessing International Disaster Relief “Advance Team” En Route To Washington, IL To Assess Tornado Damage

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA (November 18, 2013) – The humanitarian organization Operation Blessing International (OBI) has sent an advance team to the Washington, IL area today following deadly tornadoes over the weekend.

The OBI team is currently en route and will arrive this afternoon to assess the damage and to determine if the charity will deploy its full disaster relief team and equipment, and possibly coordinate volunteers. In early 2012, OBI coordinated more than 3,000 volunteers and over 23,000 volunteer hours for relief efforts in partnership with the Harrisburg, IL Emergency Manager and Illinois State Emergency Management (IEMA) following tornadoes in Harrisburg, IL.

Jody Herrington-Gettys, director of domestic disaster relief for the charity, said, “The news reports we’ve seen of the damage vary widely, from a few neighborhoods to hundreds of homes destroyed. We decided to send our advance team to see what the situation is on the ground and then we’ll make a decision as to whether we deploy from here or not.”

Should OBI decide to respond, it will send its Mobile Command Center and a construction trailer full of tools for debris removal and supplies for volunteers.

Even if the domestic disaster relief team is not deployed, OBI will still partner with local churches and other groups in order to assist with their efforts through grants and donations.

“Operation Blessing International will still be helping those who’ve lost their homes, even if we don’t fully deploy,” added Herrington-Gettys.

Anyone wishing to donate to the relief efforts can do so at www.ob.org.

ABOUT OPERATION BLESSING INTERNATIONAL:

Operation Blessing International (OBI) is one of the largest charities in America, providing strategic disaster relief, medical aid, hunger relief, clean water and community development in 23 countries around the world on a daily basis. Currently, Forbes ranks OBI as one of its “100 Largest Charities” with an efficiency rating of 99%, and Consumers Digest also named OBI as one of “America’s Top Charities” in 2012. Founded in 1978, Operation Blessing International has touched the lives of more than 255 million people in more than 105 countries and 50 states, providing goods and services valued at over \$3.3 billion to date.

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