

Jurisdiction & Council

Disaster Response

Jurisdiction

Jurisdictions in disaster prone locations must be prepared to help and respond to natural disasters. Part of that preparedness is to fully understand the jurisdictions response capabilities and organize the types of resources the local councils can bring to bear in case of a needed response.

Jurisdictions should:

- Allocate funds for disaster relief in the jurisdiction's budget
- Maintain a list of how each council is prepared to respond in case of a disaster and update the list regularly, prior to and after disasters
- Institute a communication plan that includes contact information for council and district leaders
- Prepare, in advance, a Supreme Council assistance request should local needs exceed the jurisdiction's ability to respond, using the Supreme provided template and instructions
- Be prepared to compile a preliminary damage assessment determining how the jurisdiction will organize its relief efforts to offer timely effective support

Council Activities

Knights of Columbus councils are encouraged to engage their communities in disaster preparedness and response by organizing fundraisers, training, and various awareness exercises.

- **Preparation** – Start each fraternal year with disaster preparation activities
 - Meet with the pastor annually to identify the needs of the parish and how Knights can assist
 - Communicate to the jurisdiction leadership how the council is prepared to respond in a disaster: fundraising, awareness for relief efforts, facilities available, and preparedness education
 - Institute a communication plan to ensure council leadership can contact council members and update the information regularly
 - Maintain contact lists of the parish's vulnerable community members and ensure they are safe prior to and after a disaster has struck
- **Volunteer** – Encourage members to volunteer for opportunities suitable to their ability and the council's
 - After major disasters, those effected often need help cleaning up debris, repairing fences, spreading tarps, or a myriad of other activities
 - During and in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, never act in the context of a council beyond ensuring members of the council and parish community are safe. Unless requested by emergency professionals, by your parish or your state council leadership
- **Food Drives** – After the danger has passed, dispensing food and water is important for communities
 - Ensure the parish's vulnerable community members have access to food and water
 - Facilities such as schools, parish or council halls which are available and safe for a council to use as a point of distribution should be communicated to the state disaster coordinator

