

2017 Red Cross Liaison Report

Craig Ogilvie, Dec 2017

Need:

- Red Cross disaster preparation is vital for the safety and well-being of our community.
- Red Cross provides important services for families of armed service personnel and returning armed service personnel. No ASSET funds are requested for this program.

Strength of Program

Internationally, nationally and in the State of Iowa, Red Cross has tremendous assets that it brings to a community in times of greatest need. The staff of Red Cross are energetic and committed to their work. Red Cross works closely with the county's Emergency Management Coordinator and is active in the Story County Coalition for Disaster Recovery. During 2017, 7 volunteers deployed: Texas (Hurricane Harvey); Puerto Rico (Hurricane Maria); Eastern Iowa Floods & local home fires. Two of these deployments were to hurricane zones. Story County Conservation hosted a zeroToHero training at McFarland Park. This is a Friday to Sunday training that produces volunteers who can be deployed after home fires.

Weakness of Program

Red Cross is working to increase prevention services across Iowa as their leadership has identified that Iowa is very responsive to emergencies but perhaps needs to emphasize prevention, especially for preventing home fires. Red Cross has contracted with an analytics firm to identify regions within counties with the largest fire risk. There are some census tracts at high risk, so these could be targeted for interventions to place smoke-detectors within homes. This has the potential to reduce the risk. The model also has room for refinement – to include the recent buildings of large apartment complexes.

General Assessment

The deployment not only provides our fellow citizens with critical disaster response, but the deployed volunteers return with significant experience and expertise. This can be complemented with entry-level training.

Future Outlook

- More work can be done in the area of fire prevention, but this will require careful identification of those areas of Story County that are most at risk so that resources can be best applied.