



PRESS RELEASE

Lions, LCIF Provide Relief for Southern U.S. States Hit by Destructive Tornadoes

The southern half of the United States has experienced devastating tornado storms impacting thousands of people and causing millions of dollars in damage. Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) is mobilizing US\$250,000 to assist Lions efforts in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. The Foundation has also awarded US\$160,000 in 16 emergency grants to affected districts.

On April 27, at least 280 people were killed across 6 states in one of the deadliest tornado outbreaks in the United States in 40 years. The hardest hit state was Alabama with the worst damage occurring in the cities of Tuscaloosa, where the University of Alabama is located, and northern Birmingham. Tornado winds reached speeds of 200 mph and some of the tornadoes were a mile wide. Through this destruction, Lions have been there to help out community members and their fellow Lions with emergency relief assistance. Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) has already awarded 13 emergency grants to districts in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia.

Local Lions have been active in responding to their communities' urgent needs. Past International Director Howard Jenkins and District Governor Ronald Kitchens from 30 M in Mississippi have driven the path of the tornado's destruction to survey the damage and have stated that power and electricity are down as well as most phone lines. "Lions from around the world have called me to hear how the local Lions are doing," said Lions International Director Yamandu Acosta, of Alabama. He has received calls from Australia, Spain and Peru as well as others. District Governors, Club Presidents and Lions members will be involved in the coming days and weeks helping communities with the recovery effort.

LCIF has established a designated fund for donations called the Southern U.S. Storms Fund. Donations can be sent to LCIF by check, wire or credit card. Please visit the Donation page on the LCIF Web site for more information.

Lion members are always present to serve their communities, even following disasters that have impacted their personal lives. Through the generosity of Lions from around the world, LCIF is there to support them during these challenging times. "I know that our district and the surrounding area has the support of 1.35 million Lion members through the work of our foundation," said District 18-E Governor Charles Smith from the state of Georgia.

Additional updates will be provided as appropriate activities are coordinated by Lions within these affected communities.