

Don't Trust the Red Cross, 10 Ways YOU Can Help Harvey Victims Without Enriching Scammers

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By
Editor

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Instead of padding the corporate salaries of the Red Cross, here's how you can make your donations really help the victims of Harvey.

By Matt Agorist

Houston, TX — It is time to strike while the iron is hot. Media coverage of the devastation in Texas is at a peak right now and history shows us that people will help when they see it on TV. However, when coverage stops, so does most of the support. Knowing this, it is time to make your move and show your support to your fellow humans who are suffering dearly right now after being hit by one of the worst storms in US history. But, before you simply click the link and donate to the Red Cross, you should know their history and know there are far better ways to help.

The Red Cross is no stranger to scandal. Putting them on the corruption map was their reaction to the catastrophic earthquake in Haiti. In 2010, hundreds of thousands of Haitians lost their lives in a tragic earthquake. Gail McGovern, the Red Cross' CEO, and her staff quickly responded with a massive marketing push to raise funds. They received countless celebrity endorsements and even President Obama jumped on the train. In just a few days, they raised a half a billion dollars.

However, of that half billion, the Red Cross kept [\\$125 million for themselves](#) and didn't disclose it until they were investigated. An investigation later revealed that the rest of the money the Red Cross spent in Haiti resulted in

just [six permanent homes](#), NPR and ProPublica found.

But that's not all. The Red Cross' response to Katrina was so horrific that some observers noted they were on the verge of [criminal wrongdoing](#). Years later in 2012, it failed again for Superstorm Sandy and Hurricane Isaac.

The response was “worse than the storm,” one Red Cross driver told ProPublica during its jaw-dropping investigation. The Red Cross was more concerned with their public image than helping the storm victims so much so that they ordered employees to drive around empty trucks to make it appear like they were responding. **“We were sent way down on the Gulf with nothing to give,” the driver said.**

But that's not all. Fast forward to 2016 and the Red Cross was responding to the 1000-year flood in Louisiana. Despite Nancy Malone, a spokeswoman for the Red Cross, saying that it was misinformation, there were countless reports of Red Cross stations turning down donations of supplies. Wheel chairs, crutches, canes, diabetic supplies and other goods like clothes and water, were just some of the supplies [refused by the Red Cross](#).

What's more, when they did take donations during the flood, **many of them were reported for throwing them away.**

As Justin Elliott notes, writing for [Pro Publica](#), the Red Cross stopped helping people once it was taken over by a team of former AT&T executives who tried to turn it into a profit machine instead of a charity.

As part of her effort to run the Red Cross more like a business, McGovern recruited more than 10 former AT&T executives to top positions. The move stirred resentment inside the organization, with some longtime Red Cross hands referring to the charity as the “AT&T retirement program.”

*McGovern laid out a vision to increase revenue through **“consolidated, powerful, breathtaking marketing.”***

“This is a brand to die for,” she often said.

The bottom line is that the Red Cross has become a massively centralized bureaucracy that is seemingly more concerned with self-preservation and corporate salaries than they are helping victims of natural disasters.

So, where can you go to help? Well, the answer is not simply donating to a single company who may or may not use that money to help victims. Luckily, there are smaller organizations—far more transparent than the Red Cross—who specialize in certain areas that you can choose to fund.

Below is a list of 10 ways you can help the victims of Harvey.

If you want to help the those who can't help themselves, [Portlight Strategies](#) is working to help to help [older adults and those with disabilities](#). Donate [here](#).

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals of Texas is [helping displaced animals](#). You can donate at [www.sPCA.org/give](#) or sign up to adopt a displaced animal at [www.sPCA.org/foster](#). Austin Pets Alive, which transferred more than 200 pets to its shelter as of Saturday morning, is also seeking [help](#), as are the [Animal Defense League of Texas](#) and the [Houston Humane Society](#). If you see a stranded marine animal, call the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Southeast Regional Office](#) at 1-877-942-5343.

Because these aid efforts will be prolonged for months or even years, it is best to give cash so it can be determined how to be spent in the future, which is unknown. However, if you only have supplies, donate food or cash to food banks in your area. Or you can donate to [Feeding Texas](#), a network of food banks across the state. Find your local food bank [here](#).

[The Salvation Army](#) says it is providing food and water to first responders and preparing for massive feeding

efforts for residents. Unlike their competition, the Salvation Army has a history of giving back as much as possible. Donate [here](#).

You can give blood. Outside of the Red Cross blood drives, there are also local organizations accepting blood donations, such as [Carter BloodCare](#) and the [South Texas Blood & Tissue Center](#).

The [Texas Diaper Bank](#), based in San Antonio, works to meet the basic needs of vulnerable babies, children with disabilities, and seniors. It [focuses on](#) providing partner agencies with diapers and goods. Donate [here](#).

Have no cash and no supplies, but lots of time? Volunteer. Volunteer Houston [has launched](#) a VIRTUAL Volunteer Reception Center to aid nonprofits and agencies in finding and deploying people to hard-site areas.

The [Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund](#) set up by Houston's mayor, Sylvester Turner, and administered by the Greater Houston Community Foundation is also helping victims. Donate [here](#).

If you want to help [children with complex medical needs](#) you can give to the organization Little Lobbyists. Donate [here](#).

If none of the above fit your donation fancy, then perhaps you can try GoFundMe. The crowd sourced group has compiled a list of Harvey Relief Efforts that allow you to pick individual cities, families or homes. You can view the [list here](#).

Please share this article with your friends and family to show how they can really make their donations count—instead of padding executive salaries and massive marketing budgets.

This article ([Don't Trust the Red Cross, 10 Ways YOU Can Help Harvey Victims Without Enriching Scammers](#)) was originally published on [The Free Thought Project](#) and syndicated by [The Event Chronicle](#).

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