

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita 01 September 2005

As could have been safely predicted, the response to the hurricane tragedies from WPP companies and their people has been immediate, generous, inventive and varied. It's also on-going.

Here's an incomplete list of some of the actions that our people have already taken, which we've logged for their information and possible inspiration:

- using websites to help people locate loved ones
- matching funds efforts (whereby companies match/double donations, dollar for dollar, of their employees)
- offering time off for volunteering efforts
- encouraging people to give blood to keep blood supply levels safe
- fund-raising drives
- direct marketers are working with the Direct Marketing Association, helping collect goods and pledges of service from direct merchants to be shipped to the affected areas
- many employees have donated goods in addition to monetary contributions - baby products, school supplies, bedding, personal hygiene goods, gently used clothing.....
- stocking vans/small trucks with food/supplies and driving them to shelters
- testing the practicality of 'adopting a family'
- supplying refrigerators/ice makers/air conditioners to a relief centre
- companies near the affected region have been particularly active. One individual, with his wife and friends, rented trucks and drove to New Orleans to deliver 10,000 pounds of food and supplies. His company is now considering building or sponsoring a home for the victims, under the Habitat for Humanity program.

Other people have been operating ham radios, working shifts for employees to free them up to deal with family members affected by the hurricanes, taking up collections to help employees who are housing displaced families, providing comfort and assisting with shelters.

Causes supported include: the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, The Pajama Program (providing nightwear for children/adults being sheltered in refuges), the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and the Louisiana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, among others.