

RELATED TERMS

- Distribution of Goods
- Transportation and Storage
- Warehouse



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LESSON LEARNED

PRIMARY DISCIPLINES

- Volunteer/Donations Management
- Emergency Management

Donations Management: Creative Management of Donations Received After an Emergency

SUMMARY

A major emergency requires donation managers to be creative in managing and distributing donations so as not to let the items go to waste. Transportation and storage of the goods can also present a difficult task.

DESCRIPTION

After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, New York City received a vast quantities of donated goods, including eight semi-truck loads containing stuffed animals, tons of bottled water, and a massive amount of dog food. Because these donated goods were not needed for immediate response and recovery efforts, donation managers needed to distribute the items to those agencies that could use them. All donations were first offered to New York City and New York Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) agencies; donations were then offered to all non-profit agencies in the affected area. Finally, any remaining donations were offered to those organizations that could benefit.

Donation managers and a VOAD agency created a program to warehouse and coordinate the distribution of donated stuffed animals to family centers and schools throughout the New York City area. The managers also offered the bottled water to local volunteer fire departments that could pick it up. The massive amount of dog food donated to the rescue dogs proved especially difficult to manage. The rescue dogs could not consume the food because of their specialized diets. Further, the food could only be stored in the warehouse for a short period of time because it would attract rodents. New York donation managers offered the dog food to local animal shelters and animal rescue organizations for pick-up.

Donation managers must be creative in distributing the donations they receive after a major emergency incident. Storing and transporting donations can be very costly; therefore, donations managers must evaluate whether items can be used to benefit the immediate disaster victims and area. Donations may sometimes be distributed to the greater community to ensure that items do not go to waste.

CITATION

Linda Soos-Davis. Human Services Division Chief, Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management. Phone Interview, PowerPoint Presentation.

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