

NEWS RELEASE



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Greater Houston Disaster Alliance Launches Hurricane Beryl Recovery Fund for Severely Impacted Households

*Disaster Alliance led by Greater Houston Community Foundation and United Way of Greater Houston
in partnership with City and County leaders*

HOUSTON, TX (July 15, 2024) – In response to the significant number of households affected by Hurricane Beryl, the Greater Houston Disaster Alliance, a joint effort of Greater Houston Community Foundation and United Way of Greater Houston, has established the Hurricane Beryl Recovery Fund to help those impacted by the hurricane that hit Greater Houston on July 8, 2024. The fund has received early support with lead gifts from Sarofim Foundation (\$1 million), H-E-B (\$1 million) and CenterPoint Energy Foundation (\$1 million), in addition to generous support from Shell and Wells Fargo.

In the days following the storm, fund leaders have collected data from a variety of sources to assess the extent of need in the region, including:

- Texas Department of Emergency Management iSTAT Damage Survey, which has collected 15,228 surveys from impacted households with 2,540 homes destroyed or with major damage;
- The 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE, which has received 10,856 calls from the four-county region since between July 9-14. Top needs reported are mass care shelters, cooling centers, electric service repair information, mass feeding services, functional needs and other disaster registries;
- The Connective Needs Assessment Survey, which has received 2,536 reports of need related to the disaster, including reports of 193 damaged homes and primary needs for food, utilities and financial assistance.

On July 9, 2024, President Joe Biden approved a Major Disaster Declaration in response to the hurricane's impact on multiple area counties, making federal assistance available to support local recovery efforts. All monies raised by the Disaster Alliance will complement these efforts and will be distributed as grants to nonprofit partners to provide low-to-moderate income families with emergency financial assistance, home repairs, and assistance accessing resources in Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Waller counties.

"Many in our community were still recovering from the impact of May's severe weather when Hurricane Beryl struck, creating an even larger setback for those who are disproportionately impacted when disaster strikes," said Amanda McMillian, president and CEO, United Way of Greater Houston. "This fund allows us to lift up the most vulnerable who have been impacted by Hurricane Beryl to ensure they can not only recover from the immediate crisis, but also helps them along their path towards long-term recovery."

With over 35 years of combined experience in leading disaster recovery efforts, the Greater Houston Disaster Alliance was formed by the two regional nonprofits to strengthen year-round overall disaster

preparedness and ensure the Greater Houston area has the social service network and systems in place to respond rapidly, equitably and effectively in times of disaster. Through an initial investment from Enbridge and Phillips 66, the Greater Houston Disaster Alliance focuses on maintaining and strengthening year-round disaster preparedness and recovery.

“When disaster strikes, it requires a collaborative and coordinated response from the public, nonprofit, business, and philanthropic community to ensure the most vulnerable in our region get the help they need to start the recovery and rebuilding process,” said Stephen Maislin, president and CEO, Greater Houston Community Foundation. “An informed and efficient response to help those severely affected begin the recovery process plays a huge part in how quickly families can move forward, and we hope our community will join us in supporting neighbors who need their help.”

Based on data showing areas with high need, the fund will serve residents of Harris, Fort Bend, Montgomery and Waller counties who were affected by the severe weather. Those who were affected by the hurricane should complete the [Connective Needs Assessment](#) to receive more information on assistance. Those who need immediate assistance are encouraged to call the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE, the community’s key 24/7 information source during times of disaster. United Way’s 211 provides callers with the most updated information on assistance with utilities, housing or rental assistance, crisis counseling, access to senior services, information on food pantries in the community and more. Assistance through 211 can also be accessed through the following methods in the event of long wait times due to periods of heavy call volume:

- Visit 211texas.org to search resources online or chat online with a specialist.
- Email help@unitedwayhouston.org for assistance.

“Our community was battered by this terrible hurricane and we need all the help we can get to recover. Currently, nonprofits are activated, volunteers are doing their work and we’re doing everything we can to get federal resources. But even all of that is not enough. There are still countless families with a tree through their roof, water damage and medically vulnerable family members. The Hurricane Beryl Recovery Fund will help us leverage the generosity of the Houston community in supporting our recovery and lend a hand to the hardest-hit families. Thank you to the United Way and the Greater Houston Community Foundation for making this possible and helping with our recovery process,” said Judge Lina Hidalgo.

“As power is restored and communication pathways get back online, we know that reported needs are going to continue climbing quickly and daily. Urgent needs are pressing, and we applaud the work underway by relief and response partners,” said Mayor John Whitmire. “We know recovery needs for our most vulnerable neighbors will be significant and require a public-private response, and the activation of the Hurricane Beryl Recovery Fund is an important component in overall recovery efforts.”

For more information on the Hurricane Beryl Recovery Fund and how to donate, visit www.disasteralliance.org/beryl.

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About Greater Houston Community Foundation

Since 1995, Greater Houston Community Foundation has helped Houston thrive by convening philanthropic resources and knowledge to drive philanthropy in our community, distributing over \$2.2 billion in grants recommended by its donors since inception. The organization supports high profile community and donor initiatives with the most comprehensive philanthropic resources, expertise, and innovative platforms. Greater Houston Community Foundation is widely considered to be the go-to partner for high-profile philanthropic partnerships in the Greater Houston area, including major disaster relief initiatives, such as the Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund as well as Bush-Clinton Katrina

Fund. Greater Houston Community Foundation leads collaborations that support the wellbeing and vitality of Houston, including [Understanding Houston](#), a regional indicator initiative with strategic research partner Rice Kinder Institute. The Foundation provides individuals, families, corporations, foundations, and advisors with the ability to expand their philanthropic impact. For more information, please visit, www.ghcf.org.

About United Way of Greater Houston

United Way of Greater Houston connects people to possibility. We unite donors, volunteers and community partners in support of a focused plan to remove barriers on the path to financial stability for families and individuals. Programs focused on financial stability, early childhood and youth development, and physical and behavioral health care help our neighbors land on their feet and stay there. These programs are supported by a foundation of basic needs assistance and help for those escaping violence. For families and individuals who are ready, our individualized approach includes Navigators to guide them as they access multiple services on their unique journey to financial stability. United Way also connects our neighbors with help, hope and critical resources 24/7/365 through the 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE. A focus on equity is integral to United Way's work and program investments are evaluated on how diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging is incorporated into policies, practices and service delivery. Our community investments are backed by research, ensured by good stewardship and deliver results. For more information, visit www.unitedwayhouston.org.