



North Dakota Brings Fast Disaster Relief During Spring Floods

Customer Profile:

State of North Dakota

Partner Since:

2009

Industry:

Government

Aidmatrix Program:

National Donations Management Network™ (NDMN)

NDMN Program Modules:

SCM: In-Kind Donations Management Module

SCM: Needs Management Module

Volunteer Management: Registration Module

Fundraising: Financial Donations Referral Module

Critical Humanitarian Challenge

With snowfall levels exceeding more than 500 percent above normal in parts of North Dakota, the State braced for an active flooding season in the Spring of 2009. That flooding began in earnest the week of March 20th when floodwaters destroyed a portion of the small town of Linton. The flooding continued when an ice jam caused major flooding in the capital city of Bismarck beginning March 23rd and rivers throughout the State began to exceed their flood stages. While fighting floods in other parts of the State, emergency management officials cast a wary eye toward the State's largest city of Fargo, where the Red River began a rapid rise that would eventually result in a record crest. The rising Red River set the stage for a possible evacuation of more than 90,000 people from the Fargo area. While record crests were achieved throughout the State, preplanning helped to avoid major evacuations. By the end of the flood event, more than two months later, all but five of North Dakota's 53 counties had received a presidential major disaster declaration.

Program Benefits

- Increased donations meeting the needs of the community
- Provided relief to victims in an efficient manner
- Decreased time spent organizing and distributing donations and volunteers
- 211 donations entered into the system within the first three days that the system was operational
- Several hundred thousand dollars' worth of donations through the NDMN system during the flood event
- *BottomLine: More people receive the right aid more quickly*

Business Case

In March of 2009, several factors collided creating the worst Spring flooding in the history of the State of North Dakota. As the nation's eyes focused on the efforts to battle the flooding there, offers of donations began to pour into the State. State officials recognized the potential problems associated with a disorganized donations management system and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The Aidmatrix Foundation on March 25, 2009.

Disaster Relief In Action

With the MOU in place, the State put together a donations coordination team (DCT) with members from the State, Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), North Dakota Citizen Corps and the North Dakota League of Cities. FEMA was able to provide invitational travel to bring in a representative from Aidmatrix and an Adventist Community Services representative who helped to implement use of the National Donations Management Network (NDMN) during the California wildfires to complete the DCT. The team was tasked with implementing the NDMN in the State of North Dakota.

The DCT's first task was to obtain buy-in from the North Dakota VOAD organizations that would be using the NDMN. This task was achieved through conference calls with VOAD membership and trainings on the use of the NDMN. North Dakota VOAD members in good standing became the first "vetted" organizations assigned usernames and passwords for the NDMN.



North Dakota Flood Relief Story — Continued

"Aidmatrix and the National Donations Management Network have helped us reduce paperwork and focus on relief efforts so communities and individuals with unmet needs can be helped more quickly."
Sarah Werner, Citizen Corps Coordinator for the North Dakota League of Cities and VOAD officer

If you are interested in learning more about the National Donations Management Network (NDMN) program, please contact us at info@aidmatrix.org

After buy-in and training of VOAD members was achieved, the next step for the DCT was to create awareness of the NDMN amongst the general public. This was achieved by placing a link to North Dakota's NDMN portal on the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services' Web site and distributing a news release through the governor's office.

Through North Dakota's use of the National Donations Management Network, the State was able to avoid opening a multiagency warehouse by heading off unsolicited donations until they were needed. "Aidmatrix and the National Donations Management Network have helped us reduce paperwork and focus on relief efforts so communities and individuals with unmet needs can be helped more quickly," stated Sarah Werner, Citizen Corps Coordinator for the North Dakota League of Cities and VOAD officer.

There were 211 donations entered into the system within the first three days that the system was operational. North Dakota accepted several hundred thousand dollars' worth of donations through the NDMN system during the flood event. North Dakota VOAD members also posted several needs on the NDMN portal for potential donors to fulfill. The system helped VOAD member agencies to work better together and with the State to get the items they needed. FEMA's ability to bring in NDMN experts to help the State implement the use of the NDMN system was also very helpful in getting North Dakota's portal up and running in a short amount of time.

Lessons Learned

In the midst of a humanitarian crisis and ensuing media spotlight, North Dakota courageously undertook implementing a system for disaster relief which they had never used before. Their commitment to seeing it through in the midst of the chaos helped minimize wasted donations. The NDMN system, along with seasoned veterans who had used the system in countless other disasters, helped them quickly coordinate the donations process and route necessary relief items to the responding relief agencies on the ground. North Dakota now stands well-prepared for future disasters and is a testament to how quickly the NDMN system can be up and running to help manage disaster response.