



**American
Red Cross**

DECEMBER 2024

Southern and Midwest Tornadoes: Three-Year Report

RESPONSE AT A GLANCE



Served more than
**119,300 meals and
snacks** with partners



Provided more than
**57,100 overnight
shelter and hotel
stays** with partners



Reached an estimated
14,400 individuals
with recovery
services, including
financial assistance



Distributed relief
supplies to more than
2,960 households

Cumulative figures in Arkansas, Kentucky,
Missouri and Tennessee as of December 2, 2024.

Standing With Communities for the Long Haul

Three years ago, thousands of lives were forever changed when a band of destructive tornadoes ripped across parts of Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri and Tennessee. Sadly, dozens of people lost their lives, and thousands of survivors saw their homes and communities torn to pieces. During those initial harrowing days and weeks, hundreds of dedicated Red Cross volunteers worked around the clock to meet urgent needs, ensuring survivors had roofs over their heads and warm meals to eat.

Over the months and years, we have focused on supporting survivors as they rebuild their homes and their lives. In the past year, the Red Cross has continued to help individuals and families on the long road to recovery through an additional round of financial assistance as well as targeted grants to nonprofit partners. These partners have built homes, made people safer by installing tornado shelters and provided new furniture for people who lost everything to the storms.

“Red Cross has tremendously helped me in a lot of ways,” said Clara Rice, of Dawson Springs, Kentucky, noting how our teams helped with cleanup and food in the tornadoes’ initial aftermath and then installed tornado shelters in her community. Clara received hers this June.

The Red Cross can be there for people like Clara thanks to donors like you. Your incredible investment powered immediate relief as well as lasting, impactful recovery for communities affected by this life-changing disaster. Thank you for all you make possible.

Helping Families With Financial Assistance and Casework

Financial assistance programs are vital to helping disaster survivors recover. These programs are especially important to meeting the recovery needs of people experiencing high levels of pre-disaster social vulnerability.

Financial assistance programs are vital to helping disaster survivors recover.

In June 2023, we piloted Expanded Recovery Assistance, our third round of financial assistance for people impacted by these tornadoes. Since launching, the Red Cross Expanded Recovery Assistance program for this disaster has helped over 500 households, reaching over 1,300 people. Under the program, qualifying families received \$4,500 per household. Expanded Recovery Assistance is targeted toward people who had high pre-disaster levels of social vulnerability and continue to experience significant barriers to their recovery in the areas of housing, employment, childcare, food security, transportation, or health and mental health. Along with direct financial support, the program also provided an opportunity for caseworkers to better connect with participants and understand their unique recovery needs.

In addition to Expanded Recovery Assistance, we offered two earlier rounds of financial assistance: Immediate Assistance to meet survivors' urgent post-disaster needs, such as food and replacement clothing, and Bridge Assistance to help people turn the corner and afford things like deposits on temporary housing. As of December 2, 2024, we've provided \$9.2 million in relief and recovery financial assistance to help thousands of individuals and families impacted by the December 2021 tornadoes.

Working With Partners to Help Survivors Rebuild Their Homes and Lives

Partnering with local nonprofit organizations has been central to our long-term recovery programming in areas impacted by the December 2021 tornadoes. Our investment in these organizations helps power their unique expertise and stimulate local economies.



Clara Rice's family talks with Red Cross representatives while a storm shelter (pictured right) is installed in her home in Kentucky. Photos by Chris McGreevy/American Red Cross and Clara Rice

“I thank the Lord I had a safe place for me and my grandkids, my daughter and her boyfriend. I’m so grateful it was installed in time.”

**CLARA RICE,
WHO RECEIVED A
TORNADO SHELTER
THROUGH LONG-TERM
RECOVERY PROGRAMMING**

Community Foundation of West Kentucky: Storm Shelters After the tornadoes, we discovered many impacted residents lacked secure storm shelters, putting them at risk for injury or worse in a subsequent disaster. To prevent these tragedies, we worked with the Community Foundation of West Kentucky to install shelters in six counties in western Tennessee and seven counties in western Kentucky. We have installed 130 shelters, up from the initial goal of 110, due to the program’s popularity.

Tornadoes destroyed Clara Rice’s home twice, first in December 2021 and then again in early 2024. In 2021, she rode out the storm with her baby grandsons in a bathtub. Terrifyingly, the storm’s powerful winds ripped the tiny infants away from her and launched them into a field of debris. Thankfully, they were found unharmed, but it could have been much worse. When tornadoes struck again in 2024, Clara and her family were able to weather the storm in a shelter at her neighbor’s house, which was installed through our storm shelter program. In June 2024, the program installed a shelter at Clara’s home as well.

“The sound of the tornado coming over the shelter was the scariest thing I’ve ever heard in my life,” Clara said, referring to the tornado earlier this year. “I thank the Lord I had a safe place for me and my grandkids, my daughter and her boyfriend. I’m so grateful it was installed in time.”

Appalachia Service Project: Home Reconstruction In hard-hit Graves County, Kentucky, the need for housing far exceeded the level of support that partners were able to provide. To help meet the need, the Appalachia Service Project, which provides affordable housing and home repairs, accepted a Red Cross grant to build 10–12 homes for displaced families. The homes will have no mortgages, but qualifying families must be able to afford taxes and insurance. Since the Red Cross has been deeply involved in understanding and helping survivors of this disaster for years, we connected the Appalachia Service Project with the local case managers, who referred families to the program.

St. Vincent de Paul House in a Box: Making Homes Whole Imagine finally moving into a new home after a life-changing disaster only to spend months sleeping on the floor or without a working refrigerator because you can’t afford these essentials. To help individuals and families facing these kinds of barriers to recovery, we have granted funds to St. Vincent de Paul’s House in a Box program, which provides free furniture, appliances and household items.

Vickie Bradley, of western Kentucky, lost everything to the December 2021 tornadoes and subsequent mold. Through the House in a Box Program, she has received new appliances and furniture, including a bed for her granddaughter. Vickie said the House in a Box delivery marked the first time all her appliances worked at the same time. “I am just speechless. Everything is brand new, and my little granddaughter was already planning what type of comforter she wants for her bed,” Vickie said.

“I am just speechless. Everything is brand new, and my little granddaughter was already planning what type of comforter she wants for her bed.”

**VICKIE BRADLEY, WHO
RECEIVED REPLACEMENT
FURNITURE THROUGH A RED
CROSS GRANT PROGRAM**



Habitat for Humanity: Increasing Capacity for Home Repairs We provided a grant to Habitat for Humanity to build a community tornado shelter and help its local affiliates in Kentucky meet increased need for home repairs in the tornadoes' aftermath. The new shelter was built in Bowling Green, an area hit hard by the tornadoes, and will serve as a community center. With Red Cross grant funds, Habitat was also able to grow its capacity in Kentucky by expanding its warehouse space, buying new vehicles and training its staff to build Fortified Roofs, a specific type of roof construction that can better withstand disaster impacts. The funding also supported the supplies and materials to build 25 additional Fortified Roofs for families impacted by the disaster.



Above: Red Cross grant funds helped Habitat for Humanity build a community tornado shelter in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Photo by Chris McGreevy/American Red Cross
Right: Vickie Bradley and her granddaughter received furniture and appliances through St. Vincent de Paul's House in a Box Program, a recipient of Red Cross grant funding. Photo courtesy of Vickie Bradley

Donors Make This Vital Work Possible

Thanks to our generous donors, the Red Cross has raised approximately \$51.4 million, including state reimbursements and the value of critical donated goods and services, to help people affected by the December 2021 Southern and Midwest Tornadoes. As of December 2, 2024, the Red Cross had already spent or made commitments to spend approximately \$50.9 million on emergency relief and recovery efforts for these storms. This does not include grantee awards that are in process and have not yet been disbursed. We will continue to program the remaining funds to provide and support services for both individual and community long-term recovery in the impacted regions.

Southern and Midwest Tornadoes Expenses and Commitments (in millions)^{1,2}

as of December 2, 2024

Expense Categories	Food, Shelter and Relief Items	Health and Emotional Support	Financial Assistance	Community Recovery and Resilience	Total	Expense %
Community grants and enhancements	–	–	–	\$21.1	\$21.1	42%
Recovery financial assistance	–	–	\$6.2	–	\$6.2	12%
Financial assistance, food and other relief items	\$1.6	\$0.5	\$3.0	–	\$5.1	10%
Full-time Red Cross employees	\$0.8	–	\$0.2	\$3.3	\$4.3	9%
Temporary disaster hires	\$0.4	–	–	\$3.0	\$3.4	7%
Deployment of volunteers and staff (includes airfare, lodging, meals and vehicles)	\$1.2	\$0.6	\$0.7	\$0.2	\$2.7	5%
Kitchen, shelter and other logistics that enable service delivery	\$0.3	–	–	\$1.4	\$1.7	3%
IT, communications and call centers	\$0.2	\$0.1	\$0.1	\$0.2	\$0.6	1%
Freight, postage and warehousing	\$0.6	–	–	–	\$0.6	1%
Equipment, maintenance and fueling of Red Cross emergency vehicles and rented trucks	\$0.1	–	–	–	\$0.1	0%
Total Program Expenses	\$5.2	\$1.2	\$10.2	\$29.2	\$45.8	90%
Management, general and fundraising ³					\$5.1	10%
Total Spent and Committed					\$50.9	100%
Additional budgeted recovery programs					\$0.4	
Management, general and fundraising remaining to be applied					\$0.1	
Total Budget⁴					\$51.4	

¹ Dollar figures in all tables are rounded to the nearest \$100,000; therefore, expenses \$49,999 and below are represented as zero.

² Includes tornado responses in Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri and Tennessee.

³ Management, general and fundraising expenses support our work at its core and are indispensable to running the organization and helping people in need. They include the people and systems to maintain our enterprise-wide computer and telecommunications, HR and payroll systems to support more than 19,000 employees and nearly 300,000 volunteers, fundraising and communications functions, and other support services across all program lines. Ninety cents of every dollar spent for Southern and Midwest Tornadoes will support delivering care and comfort to help people affected by these storms.

⁴ As of December 2, 2024, we have raised approximately \$51.4 million for the Southern and Midwest Tornadoes. This includes \$1.2 million in reimbursements from the state of Kentucky. Kentucky Tornadoes donations are supporting the response in Kentucky, and Southern and Midwest Tornadoes donations are supporting all responses across impacted states.



Thank you!



**American
Red Cross**

The Red Cross must be ready for every disaster, big or small, and we respond to an average of more than 60,000 disasters each year—including home fires, severe weather, floods and wildfires. Those in need turn to the Red Cross in their darkest hours because they know they can depend on us right after the disaster and throughout their recovery. Your donation helps us fulfill this promise. We are grateful for your trust.

For more information about our response to this disaster and stories of people we've helped, please visit our Southern and Midwest Tornadoes story map at [redcross.org/southern-midwest-tornadoes](https://www.redcross.org/southern-midwest-tornadoes).