

American Logistics Aid Network (ALAN) Mobilizes In Wake Of Recent Tornadoes

For Immediate Release/For further information, contact: Lori Lockman,

LAKELAND, Fla. December 14, 2021 – As relief efforts begin for this weekend’s devastating tornadoes, the American Logistics Aid Network (ALAN) is preparing to work overtime – and asking members of the logistics community to be ready to help.

“The last few days have been filled with tragic reports from areas affected by at least 30 tornadoes, including a long track tornado that crossed four states. We mourn alongside those who’ve lost friends, family, and co-workers to these events,” said Kathy Fulton, ALAN’s Executive Director. “In response, ALAN has activated to support these communities via our network of non-profit partners.”

ALAN has an active [Disaster Micro-site](#) where it features a list of its latest open requests, and it will be updating this site frequently as requests for post-tornado assistance arrive.

“That hasn’t happened yet, because people are still actively engaged in life-saving search and rescue efforts. But once humanitarian organizations begin assessing what is needed in the affected areas, they’ll be requesting various forms of logistics assistance from ALAN, including transportation, warehousing, and material handling,” Fulton said. “In light of that, we’re asking people to connect with us frequently over the next few days and weeks, because that’s when the real need for our industry’s support will begin.”

Fulton added that the initial requests for ALAN’s assistance should start coming in within the next 48 to 72 hours.

In the interim, ALAN is coordinating and communicating with many of the non-profit groups that will be providing first response and relief efforts – and asking businesses NOT to self-deploy or organize collection drives.

“We have already begun hearing about collection drives and “trucks driving around with no place to deliver their donations.” Although the intention behind these efforts is good, they [often create more challenges than they solve](#), including getting in the way of rescue efforts,” she said. “So please don’t add to an already difficult situation. If you truly wish to help, send funds. Cash donations allow non-profits to buy what they need, when and where they need it, and that will help survivors faster.” (For more on that, see the attached list of post-tornado advice.)

“Now, as always, we wish that we didn’t have to send out notifications like this, because it means there’s another community that’s suffering” said Fulton. “However we’re grateful to know that so many members of the logistics industry are anxious to help, and we’re thankful in advance for everything they’ll be doing to help us save – and improve – the lives of disaster survivors.”

ALAN's Helpful Post-Tornado Relief Do's And Don'ts

Do make sure your employees are safe – and supported.

If any of your facilities were located in the any of these storms' path be sure to check in with your employees to ensure they are safe and sound. And if they have been affected, make helping them and their families your first priority, because even though many government and non-profits will be stepping in to provide relief, few things are more meaningful than knowing that the people we work with (and for) have our backs.

Don't forget that we're here for you.

Have any of your operations been affected by the tornados? Do you need any specific information or insights – and if so, what kind? Drop us an e-mail at ops@alanaid.org. We'll do our best to get you answer or to put you in touch with someone who can.

Do let us know if you might be willing to help.

If you have warehouse space, trucks, equipment, or expertise to share, go ahead and [offer it](#) now. (And please know that we understand you're making an offer, not a guaranteed commitment to provide services. It just lets us know that you're okay with us reaching out and at least asking if you might be able to assist) The more advance information we have about available resources, the more quickly and effectively we'll be able to fulfill requests for assistance as they come in.

Don't assume you can't be of help just because your operations are nowhere where a tornado hit.

Often the donated materials that urgently need to get to disaster sites may be located much farther away and require more logistics support than you might imagine. As a result, the seemingly random or remote location, service or piece of equipment you're offering may be just the ticket.

Do check ALAN's web site and [Disaster Micro-Site](#) often over the next few weeks.

We'll be updating it frequently as conditions change, including posting specific relief requests and sharing any important infrastructure updates.

Don't host a collection drive for products.

Although the intention behind these drives is good, they [often create more challenges than they solve](#) – including adding more products to a supply chain that is already under tremendous strain. At a time when transportation capacity to disaster-impacted markets is so overloaded, the last thing we need to do is choke it even more.

In a similar vein, don't self-deploy. Often having extra, unsolicited "help" while search and rescue efforts are taking place can impede critical first response efforts.

Do consider helping in other ways instead.

If you're looking for a tangible way to engage your employees in hurricane relief, pick a humanitarian organization and collect money for it instead. Such donations will be much more useful and efficient, especially right now. And unlike many post-disaster product donations (which often end up in landfills), they will not go to waste.