

Joplin, Missouri: Partnering in the Relief Effort

When we heard about the Joplin tornado on May 22, our first reaction was the shock and horror shared nationwide. Our second was to ask what IRN could do to help. We have access to a large quantity and variety of usable furniture and equipment. How could we put it to use?

Unless you are working with a specific organization on-site relief effort, it will literally have nowhere to go, and instead of helping it will get in the way. It will be turned back.

The morning after the tornado, we contacted our partner network and found that Feed the Children was closely involved in relief efforts. FTC identified several urgent needs, including beds and mattresses, bedding, refrigerators and cooking appliances.

Finding the Relief Suppliers We reviewed our project list and saw two coming up right away which was also replacing several hundred mattresses. The University of Central Missouri was scheduled for a project that included a large number of beds and cots with their bedding. IRN contacted both schools and got their OK to direct these items to Joplin.



Stacey Clark took this photo of damage in Joplin, MO on June 6



Student crew, IRN, and Staples staff loading microfridges, Boston University



Beds and cots staged and being loaded, University of Central Missouri

Finding Trucks We looked for a partner with national trucking capabilities who could provide immediate transportation to Joplin. Staples stepped up to the plate, agreeing to provide trucks and trucking, at their cost, with just two days notice.

Making it Click

A crew of BU student volunteers loaded 133 fridge-microwaves and 75 mattresses onto a Staples box truck. On June 2 and 3, UCM loaded and shipped 500 bedspreads and blankets, 75 camp beds, and 50 military cots. The loads were delivered to Joplin on June 6, and are now making a difference to families who are trying to put their lives back together.



June 6, 2011: Staples trucks arriving and unloaded by Staples staff, Joplin



organizations in the interest of all. The surplus program takes the model a step further, in that the situations. There are a lot of reasons we love what we do. This is one of the best.

