



The United States Conference of Mayors

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U.S. MAYORS RESPOND TO HURRICANE GUSTAV: PRESIDENT DIAZ INFORMS FEMA OFFICIALS OF IMPACT ON BATON ROUGE

Hurricane Relief Operation Being Run From St. Paul/Minneapolis

St. Paul, Minnesota – Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director of The United States Conference of Mayors, today received an update from Baton Rouge Mayor Kip Holden on the conditions in Baton Rouge following Hurricane Gustav. Because Baton Rouge was not ordered to evacuate, citizens are still in the city and are bearing the brunt of the storm's impact.

Yesterday, Baton Rouge Mayor Kip Holden briefed the nation's mayors on the needs of Baton Rouge on a conference call led by USCM President Miami Mayor Manny Diaz, USCM Second-Vice President Burnsville MN Mayor Elizabeth Kautz and USCM Executive Director Tom Cochran. Mayor Holden explained the extent of the storm's damage and indicated that Baton Rouge desperately needs the immediate help of the nation's mayors. Approximately 300,000 homes are still without power. Wind damage is extensive and approximately 1,000 trees are down, so tree-cutters are critical. Most importantly, Baton Rouge needs **generators, ice, food and water**. Mobile (AL) Mayor Sam Jones, Meridian (MS) Mayor John Robert Smith, Long Beach (CA) Mayor Bob Foster and New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin have already responded and are currently sending supplies to Baton Rouge.

After yesterday's USCM conference call on Hurricane Gustav, Conference President Diaz called and spoke to FEMA Director Paulison. Mayor Diaz informed the FEMA Director of the specific equipment and resources desperately needed by the city and citizens of Baton Rouge as personally stated by Baton Rouge Mayor Kip Holden during the mayors' conference call. The FEMA Director thanked Mayor Diaz for bringing the Baton Rouge situation to his attention. Director Paulison also informed Mayor Diaz that the counties west of New Orleans were badly hit. Director Paulison told Mayor Diaz that because of his call, Paulison would be bringing President George W. Bush with him today to Baton Rouge to personally inspect and address the needs of the city.

"Clearly, the Baton Rouge story is not being told in the media. The nation's mayors are concerned that the needs of the people of Baton Rouge are not being met and mayors are rallying to their aid," said USCM Executive Director Tom Cochran.

Cochran is pleased to report that the U.S. Conference of Mayors has also reached out to their corporate partners, specifically, Walgreens, who has responded favorably. Cochran also held a conference call today with 130 businesses to encourage continued support.

Miami Mayor Diaz, an expert on hurricane preparedness and recovery, advised the nation's mayors to remember that the real work begins after the national media leaves. "The work is not over yet; it is just beginning. Often some of the bigger damage is done to homes and other structures after the storm leaves," warned Diaz.

Baton Rouge is reporting that the following items are still desperately needed:

- **PORTABLE GENERATORS**
- **FOOD AND WATER**
- **ICE**
- **ROOF TARPS**
- PERSONAL HYGIENE ITEMS
- TRAILERS TO HAUL & STORE
- FIRST AID SUPPLIES
- BLOW-UP MATTRESSES
- WASHING SUPPLIES (POWDER)
- COTS
- PORTABLE STORAGE PODS
- BLANKETS
- PORTABLE RADIOS (AM)
- COMMUNICATION DEVICES
- HAND SANITIZER
- BABY SUPPLIES/DIAPERS