

DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAMS SET UP

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Written By Ann Doyle

Stacy Scott's home on Home Court isn't quite the same these days.

During Hurricane Kate, a tree limb crashed through the living room. Another fell over the kitchen. The rugs are mildewed, the floors are warped and a basket of clothing is ripped and soiled.

On Tuesday, Scott was among about 30 families asking for help at an American Red Cross Disaster Relief Service Center.

The center, in the Old Armory at North Monroe and Seventh Avenue, is open from 9:00AM to 6:00PM. It's there to help the neediest people get such essentials as food, clothing and linens.

Center coordinator George Peterson said volunteers are especially trying to help those who have suffered property loss or damage, or disaster-related injuries.

"If you've had a power outage alone, we can't really help," Peterson said.

"We're trying to provide immediate emergency needs."

In addition, the American Red Cross has fed about 1,300 families in Franklin and Gulf Counties. Tuesday night, it planned to start feeding 150 families in Gadsden County.

Most of those families are still without power.

There are other problems, too.

American Red Cross officials estimate that in Leon County alone, 21 homes have been destroyed, 385 have received major damage and 919 have suffered minor damage.

On Tuesday, the Leon County United Way announced that it's creating an emergency-disaster-relief fund to help uninsured victims of Hurricane Kate.

It hopes to raise at least \$25,000 and has added that amount to its 1985 campaign.

People who want to contribute to the special relief fund can contact their United Way representative at work or the United Way office in town, 681-9281 or 878-1203.

Bill Thomas Chevrolet and the Tallahassee Democrat plan to kick off the fund with contributions of \$1,000 each, officials announced at an afternoon news conference.

Right down the street from United Way on Tuesday, families waited to see if they were eligible for help at the Old Armory.

Scott said she, her husband, James Clark and their 16-month-old baby boy badly need assistance to get the like back to normal in their trailer.

“It’s been hell,” said Scott, whose family moved into the trailer only two weeks before the storm hit. “We’re just going to have to rebuild the front part. I don’t know how.”

Peterson said the American Red Cross has a list of damaged dwellings – a list compiled by staff and volunteers. If a family’s home is on the list and it the home were seriously damaged, American Red Cross can provide help, Peterson said.

If the family’s home is not on the list, someone should call the American Red Cross at 681-9770. The agency will send someone out to survey the damage.

Money is not actually disbursed at the center, though. Residents are given a form to take to a merchant of their choice. The merchant then deals with American Red Cross.

Tuesday was the first day of business at the center. Peterson said it will remain open until it’s no longer needed.