

Dear Beth Shir Shalom members and friends,

Hillel said, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? Yet, if I am only for myself, what am I? And, if not now, when?" (Avot 1:14). Below you will find some suggestions as to how to follow Hillel's framework in your response to those dealing with the effects of Hurricane Harvey in Houston. You might want to use Hillel's guidelines and the suggestions below to give to both a Jewish organization as well as one that is not Jewishly affiliated. Thank you for your performing the mitzvah of tzedakah.

Rabbi Neil

### The American Red Cross

One of the country's oldest relief organizations, the American Red Cross is the grand-daddy of disaster, providing emergency food, shelter and medical treatment to storm victims.

### Nechama: Jewish Response to Disaster

The Minneapolis-based Nechama organization sends teams of volunteers to afflicted areas in order to help with first aid and disaster recovery. According to their site, they are devoted to living out the value of tikkun olam, or repairing the world.

### Americares

Americares is a well-regarded national charity that's focused on health interventions - and it will be sending emergency medicine, medical supplies and professionals into the storm area.

## Save The Children

The international children's charity has volunteers and staff on the ground to assist children and families threatened by the storm.

In addition to these, there are many charities in the local Houston area that are trying to deliver aid to hurricane victims. Here's a short of list of some of them, with more compiled at the Sports Blog Nation Web site.

## Jewish Family Service

Jewish Family Service is a Houston-based organization that provides counseling and disability services to Jews and non-Jews alike in the Houston area. Linda Burger, the chief executive of the group, is holed up on the second floor of her home, riding out the storm so she can help victims in the aftermath.

## South Texas Blood and Tissue Donation

This organization collects blood and organ donations for the Houston and southeast Texas area, and before the hurricane was stocking up blood supplies to local hospitals. With five dead and untold more injured, many Texans may need transfusions and organ donations in the days and weeks to come.

## Houston SPCA

Houston SPCA is the local chapter of the national organization for the prevention of cruelty to animals. With homes destroyed and residents fleeing, many pets and stray animals have been left alone in the storm to fend for themselves. The Houston SPCA is working to shelter those animals and save as many as possible.

## Texas Diaper Bank

Founded by a coalition of Methodist churches, the Texas Diaper Bank distributes hygienic supplies like diapers and baby items to families in need - and is now directing its assistance at the general public during this natural disaster.

## Central Texas Food Bank

The Central Texas Food Bank supplies needy Houston-area residents with much-needed nutrition. Now that the area has been flooded, it will be serving a much larger clientele than usual.

1. URJ Greene Family Camp in Bruceville, TX, will be available for those who need a place to stay. Camp will be open and providing housing, meals, and some programming for an indefinite period of time.

If you have been affected by the storm and are interested in coming to Greene, please fill out a form at - [urjyouth.wufoo.com/forms/r1losdaw0zoiym0/](http://urjyouth.wufoo.com/forms/r1losdaw0zoiym0/)

**If you are able to make a donation to support this special effort by the Greene Family Camp, please do so via the URJ.**

2. We are reaching out to all Reform-affiliated congregations in the affected area to provide assistance as appropriate. Their needs will become clearer in the coming days. Stefani Rozen, director of Greene Family Camp, is on site in Houston, as are other leaders of our Movement.

Jewish Federations of North American (JFNA) Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund

Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County