

Volunteers in New York Prepare Food in the Dark for Flood Victims

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation

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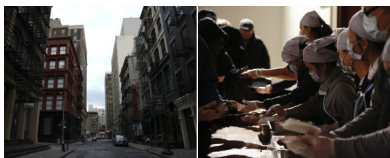


Tzu Chi volunteers in New York prepared food in the dark for victims of the devastating hurricane Sandy and delivered it to evacuees in a school. In New Jersey, volunteers delivered food and drinking water to 250 people who had been evacuated to a temporary shelter; they are planing to provide further assistance, to help them rebuild their homes.

The largest Atlantic hurricane on record, Sandy swept through the Caribbean before reaching the eastern United States on October 29 and affecting 24 states. It flooded many streets, tunnels and subway lines in Lower Manhattan and other districts of New York City and caused severe damage to New Jersey, especially the communities along the Jersey Shore. It cut the power supply to millions of homes and caused damage estimated at US\$20 billion.

The volunteers in New York and New Jersey moved as quickly as they could to help the victims of the hurricane. The first requirement was cooked food for those who had been evacuated. The volunteers of the Chinatown branch received a request from Steward Park High School in Lower Manhattan. Since they had no electricity, they had to make the food using lamps and flashlights. They posted images of their work on the website of [CNN iReport](#) , to show how, even without power, the Tzu Chi volunteers in the U.S. are doing all they could for those in need. It was a moving image – women bent over their pans frying vegetables, with a single beam of light shining down on them. They delivered the first 500 meals to evacuees at the school on the afternoon of October 31.

Meanwhile, the volunteers in New Jersey learnt through the media that water levels in the district of Teterboro had risen rapidly, causing more than 500 residents to be evacuated in a hurry; 250 were taken to a reception center. They needed drinking water and dim sum. On October 31, the volunteers went to the shelter to deliver the goods and show their concern.



At that time, 2.5 million homes in New Jersey were deprived of electricity, including Tzu Chi's branch office. While the repairs were underway, the volunteers received the request for the water and acted immediately. Fortunately, the only supermarket in the district that was open was one close to the foundation's New Jersey branch. It was there they bought the water and delivered it to the reception centre. Patti Donatello, the manager of the centre, was very moved.

Once the power is restored, they will plan further relief assistance, to help the victims resume their normal lives as soon as possible.

Reported by Wang Wan-kang and Li Cui-ling in the U.S.