Moore Oklahoma Tornado Disaster - Two Elementary Schools Flattened - Sadly, Plaza Towers Elementary Efforts Switch From Rescue To Recovery

Author : michaelbloomer

Michael Matthew Bloomer, May 20, 2013, 10:31 pm

UPDATE: Sadly, as of 10:04 pm Eastern Time, Oklahoma City's NewsChannel 4 reported:

> MOORE, Okla. – Officials said they are no longer working a search and rescue effort but now a recovery mission at the a Moore elementary school where children and teachers took shelter Monday.
>
> First responders told KFOR-TV's Lance West they don't believe there are anymore survivors in the Plaza Towers Elementary school.
>
> So far the bodies of seven children have been recovered.
>
> Crews said they believe 20 to 30 more children may be inside but again, do not believe there are anymore survivors.

Michael Matthew Bloomer, May 20, 2013, 7:00 pm

Moore, Oklahoma, a suburb 10 miles south of downtown Oklahoma City, devastated in a 1999 tornado that cost it more than 50 lives, was devoured again around 3:00 pm today by an 185+ mph EF4 tornado reported as nearly one mile wide. Damage may result in E4

to E5 destruction. If E5, this will be the second time Moore has suffered this level of destruction, according to Moore's Mayor, Glenn Lewis, speaking on MSNBC.

Tornado rating classifications	**F0**EF0	**F1**EF1	**F2**EF2	**F3**EF3		**F4**EF4
	Weak		Strong			
			Significant			
				Intense		

A series of tornadoes throughout the Oklahoma City area struck numerous towns in the area and still they hammer Oklahoma. Moore, Oklahoma's seventh most populous city - considered the worst damaged thus far during these storms - and it's 50,000+ residents once again find their city reduced to rubble. Unfortunately familiar with theses catastrophes, Moore has suffered four other large tornadoes since May 3, 1999. This one, though, appears by far the worst. Many described it as the largest tornado they have ever seen.

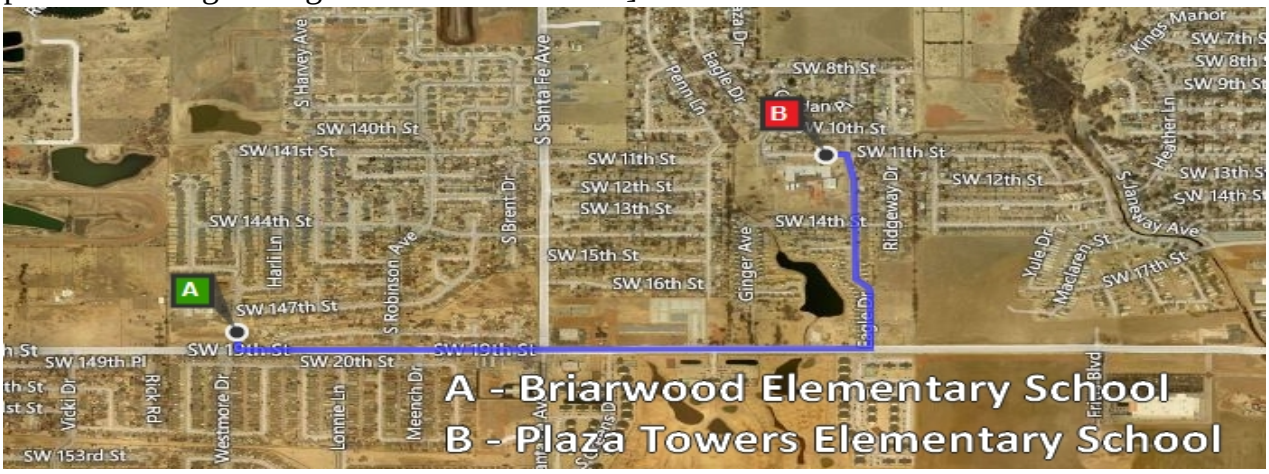
Among of the worse consequences for Moore, however, was that the tornado hit when schools were in session. At least two elementary schools were hit head-on: Briarwood and Plaza Towers. Briarwood's children have all been accounted for, and uninjured, according to MSNBC.

Not so for Plaza Towers Elementary, though. The major effort thus far is a still ongoing attempt to provide emergency rescue and care for students and staff of the literally flattened Plaza Towers Elementary School. As of 6:55 pm MSNBC reported that up to 75 students, perhaps among them children in the K through third grade, huddled in the hallways as the storm hit. Prior to the storm thirty Plaza Towers 4th, 5th, and 6th grade pupils and staff evacuated to a nearby church. Yet the lives of the youngest Plaza Towers children remained in jeopardy as of this writing.

[caption id="" align="aligncenter" width="581"]

Moore, OK - Briarwood and Plaza Towers Elementary Schools[/caption]

[caption id="" align="aligncenter" width="591"]



Briarwood to Plaza Towers Elementary School - 1 mile[/caption]

To help out with the rescue and recovery operations, experienced emergency management experts suggest that you not send articles like clothing, toys, food, etc. These well-meaning gifts actually create increased costs.

To help, send donations to:

The Salvation Army

Here is a link to donate for the Salvation Army's tornado relief in Oklahoma

https://donate.salvationarmyusa.org/uss/eds/aok

The Red Cross

Here is a link to donate to the Red Cross' tornado relief in Oklahoma

http://www.redcross.org/ok/oklahoma-city

Or use your cell phone to donate: Support #OKwx efforts - give online @SalvationArmyUSA.org or text "STORM" to 80888 2 make $10 donation #tornado

Let others know you're okay! Very critical in search & rescue efforts. #ok #okwx
https://safeandwell.communityos.org/cms/index.php

OU Sooners @UofOklahoma

The University of Oklahoma is opening up spaces in Housing for the displaced families! Call 405-325-2511

OPERATION USA

LOS ANGELES, CA (May 20, 2013) — Los Angeles-based international relief agency Operation USA announced today that it is providing emergency aid where needed to community-based health organizations across Oklahoma in the wake of a tornado that struck Moore, Oklahoma.

The massive tornado destroyed entire blocks of homes, two schools, and a medical center in the city of Moore, part of the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area. The storm system still threatens surrounding regions in the Midwest.

Operation USA is readying essential material aid– emergency, shelter and cleaning supplies– to send to where it’s most needed. Any funds collected for the disaster will be spent in Oklahoma

helping community health organizations and schools recover from damage sustained from the severe storm system.

HOW TO HELP: Donate online at www.opusa.org, by phone at 1.800.678.7255 or, by check made out to Operation USA, 7421 Beverly Blvd., PH, Los Angeles, CA 90036. Text AID to 50555 and donate $10 to Operation USA's disaster relief efforts.

Corporate donations of bulk quantities of disaster-appropriate supplies are also being requested. United and Continental air miles can also be donated to Operation USA through United Airlines Charity Miles program at www.united.com.

ABOUT OPERATION USA Since its start, Operation USA has responded to domestic disasters by providing material aid and financial assistance to affected communities. Operation USA's response to Hurricane Katrina was one of the agency's largest efforts to date. Having over 34 years of experience supporting low-income health programs, OpUSA provided millions in supplies as well as cash grants to Gulf Coast community health clinics in order to address the needs of those affected. Operation USA also aided community clinics in Joplin, Missouri following a deadly tornado that struck the area in 2011. Material and monetary aid provided in the wake of these disasters ensured the clinics' continuity of operations and allowed them to provide critical disaster relief and social services to affected communities.

Operation USA is an international relief agency that helps communities at home and abroad overcome the effects of disasters, disease and endemic poverty by providing privately-funded relief, reconstruction and development aid. Since 1979, Operation USA has worked in 100 countries, delivering over $400 million for relief and development projects.