

MAKING A DIFFERENCE ONE PATIENT AT A TIME

Joern's Purple Shirts Take On Hurricane Harvey

A signature photo from the Hurricane Harvey disaster showed senior citizens in a suburban Houston nursing home waiting helplessly to be rescued as floodwaters rose around them. They were pictured hauntingly waiting in their wheelchairs as water continued to rise past their elbows.



On Friday August 25th, all 185 residents from the Corpus Christi facility made it out of harms way and were safe and comfortable.

Rewind to Thursday August 24th. As Harvey gained strength, residents along the Texas coast made the choice to evacuate or stay. The storm was rapidly becoming more powerful, and was forecasted to become a Category 3 hurricane. Winds were expected to reach at least 111 mph by the time Harvey hit the middle Texas coast late Friday or early Saturday.

At 12:15 PM CST, Joerns Healthcare was contacted by one of our customers advising us they needed to evacuate 185 residents from Corpus Christi to San Antonio to get them out of harm's way. These were people that were most vulnerable to these kinds of disasters; they needed to get out quickly.

Per its disaster recovery protocol, the facility started the evacuation process. They would need to transport the residents to nursing homes out of Harvey's path. They had enlisted bus drivers, and had buses lined up outside the Corpus Christi nursing home to take residents to "host" nursing homes. However, there was a challenge—each of the four "host" facilities was already at capacity. They didn't have beds or mattresses to accommodate the evacuees. The customer looked to Joerns Healthcare as a highly responsive and capable partner to help solve the challenge.

To accommodate the additional residents, 110 bed frames with mattresses needed to be delivered as soon as possible. The evacuated patients were being transported from Corpus Christi that night with expected arrival time in San Antonio in early morning.

Joerns Healthcare immediately identified inventory in surrounding warehouses. Extra trucks would be needed to pick up and drive the bed frames and mattresses to the San Antonio locations, and temporary labor would need to be arranged to assist our Purple Shirt Technicians in unloading and setting up them up at each of the "host" locations.

The first trucks were loaded and left around 7 pm, arriving at the first facility around midnight with 60 frames. A team greeted the truck, ready to start unloading, unpackaging and assembling the beds and mattresses. Another truck with 36 frames arrived in San Antonio at 2 AM. The team of Purple Shirt Technicians and temporary labor worked all night to unload and set up the beds so they were ready for the arrival of the evacuated residents after an exhausting journey. Time was ticking.

At 7:14 AM, a team of less than 20 individuals (Joerns Purple Shirt Technicians, Joerns employees from Austin and Dallas, multiple facility maintenance personal and temporary laborers) completed deliveries of over 120 bed frames in 19 hours.

On Friday, August 25, all 185 residents made it to San Antonio before the powerful storm hit and were able to be accommodated safely.

Although Mother Nature continues to demonstrate that it is a formidable force, the Joerns team proved to be a powerful force itself. Working with its customer, Joerns Healthcare delivered peace of mind, security and comfort to the patients, their families and the staffs of the facilities involved. Even in the face of a pending natural disaster, safe care remained our priority.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all of those folks affected by Hurricane Harvey.