

## Lake Area United Way

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LIVE UNITED™

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### **Dire Need Continues for Volunteers to Help Families Repair Homes Damaged in NWI Floods Last September**

*(Griffith, Indiana)* - The devastating effects of the September, 2008 floods continue to affect Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties. An estimated 900 homes are still in dire need of restoration whose homeowners have nowhere else to turn.

Initiated by Lake Area United Way, Lakeshore Area Regional Recovery of Indiana (LARRI) is a long-term recovery committee working to help families whose homes are still in need of restoration yet lack the resources to get their homes back to safe and livable conditions.

"We're trying to help as many people as we can, as quickly as we can. There are so many people living in unsafe conditions in their home, so it's important to get these families living in safer conditions as soon as possible," said Steve Conger, chairman for LARRI.

There are currently over 200 homes in some phase of recovery process through LARRI, from being assessed to actually having the home physically restored. Some of these homes must be completely rebuilt because of the extensive damage.

"There are still so many families and individuals in need of assistance and the hardest part about this process is finding enough volunteers to do the work," adds Steve Conger. "We want to help every family in need but we can't do it without the help of volunteers."

LARRI is made up of a consortium of non-profit, faith-based, public, business and community groups. LARRI offers assistance by organizing volunteer labor and discounted and donated material resources to help restore homes to a safe, sanitary and secure standard. Lake Area United Way is providing fiscal management and mobilizing resources needed to repair homes and assist households.

After the floods in September, over 15,000 people in Lake County and over 1,300 in both Porter and LaPorte County filed for FEMA assistance. Many of these people did not have flood insurance and had little or no means of repairing the damages to their homes.

More than 1,000 of those affected have come to LARRI for help. Volunteers from all over Northwest Indiana and other parts of the country are coming to offer assistance through LARRI but local volunteers are also needed.

"LARRI is in need of volunteers, both skilled and unskilled, to do a variety of work including painting, cleaning,

drywall, carpentry, electrical, plumbing, and roofing. We also need building supplies and tools, housing for volunteers teams and groceries and cooked meals for volunteers,” said Steve Conger.

For more information about how you or your organization can help, please contact volunteer coordinator, Rhonda Carlson at 1-887-LARRI4U or email [rcarlson@larri.info](mailto:rcarlson@larri.info). You can also visit their website at [www.larri.info](http://www.larri.info).

The United Way Regional Volunteer Center is having its annual Day of Caring on August 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> at sites throughout Northwest Indiana. Three homes that suffered damage in the flood are going to be refurbished. Interested volunteers are encouraged to sign up. For more information please go to [www.nwivolunteer.org](http://www.nwivolunteer.org).

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