

# **United Way's Community Christmas in full swing to benefit Riverbend community during the holidays**

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**COMMUNITY  
CHRISTMAS**



The annual Community Christmas donation drive is in full swing for the holiday season as festive boxes can be spotted in businesses throughout the Riverbend community and surrounding areas. The annual event for the Southwest Illinois Division of United Way of Greater St. Louis began Monday, November 4, with boxes being delivered to participating businesses to collect donated items.

Donations to be placed in the boxes include non-perishable food items, new clothes for all ages, new winter weather necessities like gloves, hats and scarves, blankets, baby care items, hygiene items, and new toys. Items received will go to 13 local agencies to help more than 6,000 people in need during the holiday season. Many of these organizations greatly depend on the donations from United Way's Community Christmas to help those in the area have a great holiday.

All the items and monetary donations for Community Christmas stay right here in the area to help local families in need. Cash donations are also accepted and should be sent to the new Southwest Illinois Division of United Way of Greater St. Louis location at 707 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 270, East Alton, IL 62024 and marked as Attn: Community Christmas. Monetary donations will go towards buying items on the donation list that were not received in large quantities or for certain age groups.

The drive runs until Thursday, December 12, when boxes will be collected from organizations and taken to Main Street United Methodist Church in Alton where item sorting will take place. Last year, Community Christmas had more than 50 volunteers, more than 100 boxes out in the community, and received roughly 20,000 items donated.

In addition to donating items, volunteers for a variety of activities are needed and are essential to the success of United Way's Community Christmas. Volunteer opportunities include picking up donation-filled boxes once Community Christmas comes to a close, dropping them off at the sorting location, and then sorting and loading the thousands of items donated for pick-up by the agencies.

In addition, it's not too late to help out by requesting to have a box placed in a business or organization.

For those interested in donating items, volunteering or for more information, call United Way's Southwest Illinois Division at 618-258-9800. A complete list of organizations that have boxes for donations will be published in The Telegraph. Donations can also be dropped off during regular business hours at the Southwest Illinois Division of United Way at 707 Berkshire Blvd., Suite 270, East Alton, IL 62024.

About United Way of Greater St. Louis

United Way supports more than 170 health and human service agencies located

throughout a 16-county area in Missouri and Illinois. One in three people in our community receive services that strengthen families, help the elderly, keep children healthy and safe, and build stronger neighborhoods. For more information, contact 314-421-0700 or visit [www.stl.unitedway.org](http://www.stl.unitedway.org)