



# **DOs And DON'Ts Of Disaster Donations**

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A photograph showing a stack of cardboard boxes. The top box has the word 'AID' printed on it. Below it, a larger box has 'AID' printed on its right side and a white label with the word 'FOOD' on its left side. The bottom box has a white label with the word 'Medicine'. To the left, another box is partially visible with a label that says 'ine'. The background is dark and out of focus.

**AID**

**FOOD**

**AID**

**Medicine**

**ine**

SPRINGFIELD – The tornadoes that ripped through Illinois on December 10 have tugged at the heartstrings of many local communities and interest groups. While there is no doubt that the affected communities will have a long road to recovery, state and local officials have an urgent warning for those who are currently collecting donations for tornado survivors.

A flood of unsolicited donations is what disaster relief groups often call ‘the second disaster.’ Mass deliveries of donations require agencies to redirect valuable resources away from the critical core life-safety missions to oversee donation management.

“While the generosity of others is always appreciated, especially during times of great need, monetary donations allow the most flexibility in obtaining timely resources and pumps cash into the local economy that helps strengthen a community,” said IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau. “It strongly urged that any cash contributions be donated to a trusted, reputable voluntary or charitable organization.”

“Many Illinois residents have responded to the weekend storms by wanting to help the communities and people impacted by the devastation. Donating to charitable organizations providing direct aid and support is a good way to provide assistance,” Attorney General Kwame Raoul said. “Unfortunately, scammers are ready to take advantage, which is why it is important to be on the lookout for scam charities. I encourage people to visit the Attorney General’s website to find out whether a charity is registered and in compliance with state laws, or to contact my Charitable Trust Bureau to report concerns about an organization. Be an informed donor and ensure that your money reaches those in need.”

Following a disaster, many people express interest in helping those impacted by the event. IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau suggests it is best to volunteer time through a reputable disaster relief organization. Illinois VOAD volunteer organizations are working within Illinois to assist as part of the whole community’s response to the disaster. Those interested in volunteering should contact [IL VOAD](#) for additional information. Additionally, the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster ( [www.nvoad.org](http://www.nvoad.org) ) maintains a national database of voluntary and charitable organizations involved in a variety of activities, including emergency preparedness and response throughout the nation.

You can find a list of registered charitable organizations on the [Illinois Attorney General’s website](#).