

World Renew DRS Suspends Volunteer Activity until June 1, 2020

March 13, 2020 – World Renew Disaster Response Services is suspending all volunteer activities in response to the COVID19 outbreak, effective immediately, through June 1, 2020. This includes groups, 1-week and 3-week volunteers and long-term volunteers, as well as warehouse and office volunteers.

World Renew DRS staff and volunteer managers will review options with those volunteers who are currently on-site in North America. **In May, a situational review will be completed to determine whether or not volunteer activities and sites can safely be restarted on June 1, 2020.**

“This decision will have a significant impact,” said Bob Laarman, World Renew DRS director. “Homeowners who are already hurting, and have sometimes been waiting for help for months or years after a disaster, now have to wait longer for their homes to be safe and secure again. DRS will work with local partner organizations to seek other ways to support recovery in their communities. **We have a responsibility not to expose vulnerable people, homeowners, volunteers, or staff, to the risk of disease.**”

The CRCNA and World Renew directors in the U.S. and Canada have also restricted staff travel, including international and domestic trips, unless there are extenuating circumstances. **If you are sick, practice social distancing and use self-isolation guidelines if you come into contact with coronavirus. You can find a guide for self-isolation here: [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) - How to self-isolate.](#)**

If you have underlying health conditions, wash your hands thoroughly and frequently, and contact your physician as needed to ensure your good health.

“World Renew works in 32 countries worldwide,” said Carol Bremer-Bennett, World Renew U.S. director. “We are doing all that we can to keep communities safe and take the precautions needed to ensure the health of those around us. We look forward to being able to resume travel internationally as well as place our DRS volunteers and groups on worksites as soon as we are safely able.”

“We care deeply about the communities we serve and we take this duty of care to heart,” Bremer-Bennett said. “We can find comfort in the words of Psalm 91: ‘The Lord is your refuge and dwelling, no harm will overtake you and no disaster will come near you. For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways’ (vs 9-11). Please join with us in prayer for those most impacted by this disease and for a timely cure.”

To stay up-to-date on the World Renew DRS travel ban and get more information about the COVID19 pandemic, please check worldrenew.net/corona in the US or worldrenew.ca/corona in Canada. World Renew volunteers with the Global Volunteer Program or International Disaster Response Team can also find updates and links on our websites.

If you need more information about your DRS volunteer placement, please call World Renew DRS at 800-848-5818 or email drs@worldrenew.net.

To find out more about COVID19 guidelines in the US, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/index.html>.

In Canada, go to <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/being-prepared.html>.

Outside of North America, go to <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>.

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