



MINNESOTA HELPS

North Minneapolis Recovery Fund



REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY
May 2012





Natural disasters happen in a flash leaving devastating destruction in their wake. It can take years to rebuild what takes mere minutes to destroy. And so it was on Sunday, May 22, 2011, when a tornado touched down in North Minneapolis destroying property and livelihoods, and traumatizing an already struggling neighborhood. What would follow – and what continues – is a story of hope and renewal, and the power of what can happen when neighbors come together in time of need. **Ultimately, the storm brought to light the profound resilience of the Northside.**

From Storm to Strength: A Community Comes Together

While disaster relief organizations moved swiftly to provide aid, the community got to work. Neighbors helped neighbors clear debris from their yards while individuals and businesses flocked to the North Minneapolis with supplies and helping hands.

The scope of the damage soon became clear, and **within 24 hours of the tornado, The Minneapolis Foundation had activated its Minnesota Helps Fund**, which provides an easy way for our community to donate to a coordinated relief and recovery effort in the wake of a disaster.

In partnership with Greater Twin Cities United Way, we seeded the Minnesota Helps – North Minneapolis Recovery Fund with a \$200,000 challenge grant to spark more donations. We partnered with GiveMN.org to accept on-line contributions.

The strength, compassion and generosity of North Minneapolis residents and people throughout the Twin Cities showed that even a tornado cannot tear a community apart. Many offered kind words along with their contributions; among them was this message: *"I received financial support from Minnesota Helps after the 35W Bridge Collapse. They were tremendously supportive and accountable for every dollar given out. My time to pay it forward."*

Many local businesses contributed and several held fundraisers or office collections. Book clubs pooled their gifts, kids hosted lemonade stands, and a group of teens recorded a song and put on a hip-hop concert. Everyone pitched in.

The Fund hit the million-dollar mark within a month and ultimately **raised and distributed \$1.7 million dollars** to help people and neighborhoods recover from the storm. An advisory committee made up of local foundations helped guide the distribution of funding.

With damages estimated at \$166 million and FEMA denying individual assistance to those impacted, this funding provided a lifeline for uninsured households looking for shelter, and a bridge for families working through their insurance companies to get repairs taken care of before the cold weather set in.

One hundred percent of the money raised has been distributed to help North Minneapolis residents get their lives back on track. To date, **more than 60,000 North Minneapolis residents** have been assisted thanks to the generosity of Minnesota Helps Fund contributors.

North Minneapolis Leads the Way

Donations supported emergency relief and met longer-term needs including food, housing, counseling, transportation, childcare, and more.

The close relationships The Minneapolis Foundation has with organizations on the Northside led to a powerful and thoughtful response, one that was directed by the neighborhoods affected. Our expertise in giving, community issues, and local nonprofits ensured services were delivered effectively, comprehensively, and transparently.

Over the summer, youth cleared debris from local parks and **200 homes** and helped **rebuild 147 houses and apartment buildings**. About **1,700 young people** participated in summer programs and received **6,500 meals**. More than two hundred kids went on field trips to give them a break from their damaged parks and neighborhoods.

Many children were traumatized by the tornado – either from witnessing it directly or from how it affected their families’ lives. Minnesota Helps supported counseling for kids and training for teachers and summer camp workers to spot distress in children and help them overcome fears.

Hundreds of individuals and families got help with home repairs, as well as legal assistance in mediating conflicts between tenants and landlords.

Legal help was also available to help people track down and get reimbursed by “storm chaser” contractors who accepted payment, but either didn’t do the work or did sub-par work.

Minority contractors, most from North Minneapolis, were trained and certified to participate in the recovery, providing an economic boon to the neighborhood.

Over a thousand individuals received clean clothes, food and water in the days following the tornado. Additional supplies were distributed to help clean their homes and meet basic needs including provision of new ID’s, access to food stamps, housing assistance, behavioral health, and other services.

More than **51,000 individuals** received food and cooking supplies through Second Harvest Food Bank, and Urban Homeworks **repaired nearly 300 homes** in the aftermath of the tornado.

With dozens of local agencies serving thousands of people each with various needs, the need for collaboration quickly became clear. The Northside Community Response Team (NCRT) formed to ensure all residents were assisted, efforts weren’t duplicated, and funding was used as effectively as possible.

The **20 participating agencies** were able to streamline the process, creating a hotline to connect people with a caseworker to get them the help they needed. This process **helped 1,233 households** get assistance.

Among them was a family who lost everything when the home they were renting was destroyed. After calling the hotline and getting connected with Jordan New Life HUB, the mother said, *“The HUB helped with big and little things. Because of them, I was not homeless, the kids still went to school, and I was able to continue my life.”*

Minnesota Helps distributed the funds through a fair and thoughtful process to agencies meeting individual, family, and neighborhoods needs resulting from the tornado. Below is a breakdown of how the funds were distributed to help those impacted by the tornado:

At a Glance

Number of people served by the Fund: **60,000+**

Number of properties damaged: **3,700**

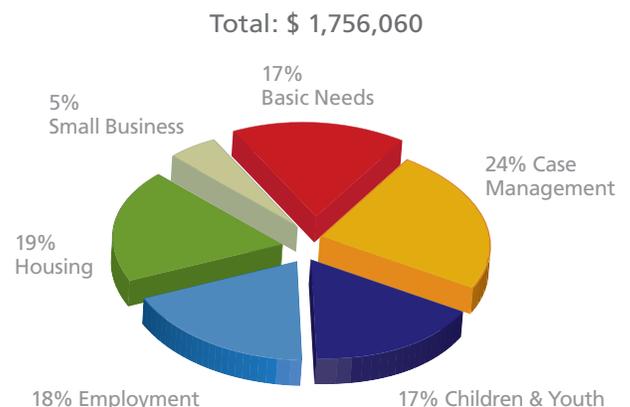
Donations: **\$1,756,060**

Distributions: **\$1,756,060**

Number of donations: **4,400+**

Organizations that provided services with support from the Fund: **36**

Distribution of Funds by Needs Met





A Recovery Fund for the Community

Thanks to all of the generous individuals who gave time and money to help those affected by the tornado, and to the many organizations working together to rebuild this vibrant part of our community.

Some wounds will take more time to heal, but Minnesota Helps aided the community in restoring itself. Today, Northside residents and organizations are working to realize a new, stronger vision for their community. The Minneapolis Foundation will be there. We hope you will, too.

For more information about Minnesota Helps and its impact, please visit MinnesotaHelps.org



About The Minneapolis Foundation

To us, community means that when each of us does better, we all do better. The Minneapolis Foundation helps charitable individuals, families, and businesses support what they love and where they live. We offer services that make giving more convenient, tax-smart, and rewarding.

Founded by local business leaders in 1915, we currently manage more than 1,000 charitable funds and more than \$500 million in assets. A board of trustees comprised of civic leaders provides direction and oversight.

Each year we award more than \$30 million in grants in accordance with our donors' wishes and to strengthen our community. We also play a civic leadership role, sparking constructive dialogue and action on critical issues.

The Minnesota Helps Fund is one of the ways we use gifts entrusted to us address challenges facing our community. In 2007, our community supported survivors of the I35W bridge collapse through the Fund. By working together, we make a bigger and more meaningful impact in our community.

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