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Supporting Community Resilience: WM Helps TEXSAR Stay Ready

A shared commitment to preparedness, response and recovery is strengthening communities across Texas, before, during and after disaster strikes

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Courtesy of TEXSAR: Volunteers assess flood impacts and support recovery operations in communities affected by the 2025 Texas Hill Country floods.

- Strategic disaster giving can create impact long after the immediate crisis has passed.
- When severe flooding struck Texas in 2026, TEXSAR was better prepared thanks in part to support received after the 2025 floods.
- WM's contribution helped give TEXSAR the flexibility to address changing needs in real time while also investing in future readiness.

One year after catastrophic flooding devastated Central Texas, the region once again faced severe flooding in July 2026. But this time, [**Texas Search and Rescue \(TEXSAR\)**](#) entered the response with stronger resources and greater readiness.

Support received following the 2025 floods, including a \$250,000 contribution from WM, North America's leading provider of comprehensive environmental solutions, helped the volunteer search-and-rescue organization strengthen equipment readiness, volunteer training and response capabilities that continue to support communities across Texas today.

"Thanks to support like WM provided during the July floods of last year, we were able to remain in a state of readiness for disasters and emergencies," TEXSAR Chief Advancement Officer Dion McInnis said. "In July 2026, flooding affected many of the same areas impacted the year before, and TEXSAR was asked to assist. We had

ground searchers and boat and swift water rescue teams respond."

For McInnis, it reinforced an important lesson: while flood waters eventually recede, the work of recovery and readiness never truly ends.

Courtesy of TEXSAR: Volunteers launch a rescue boat amid muddy, flood-damaged conditions as they support response and recovery operations during the 2025 Texas Hill Country floods.

Support That Lasts Beyond Disaster

Following the 2025 Central Texas floods, WM committed \$1 million to organizations supporting relief and recovery efforts across the region, including a \$250,000 contribution to TEXSAR.

The support extended beyond WM's corporate contribution. Employees across Texas stepped up, collecting nearly 500 essential items through donation drives and providing more than \$8,000 in personal giving. Together, these efforts helped demonstrate the many ways WM team members support communities in times of need and reflect the company's [**Communities are Thriving**](#) sustainability ambition to help support stronger, more resilient communities where we live and work.

WM employees donated nearly 500 essential items through a Bagster® bag collection drive following the Central Texas floods. The supplies supported community relief and recovery efforts across Central Texas and were distributed through multiple partner organizations assisting affected residents.

WM's disaster support approach is built around three focuses:

- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery

TEXSAR embraces a similar philosophy through its [**Before, During, After**](#) initiative, a program designed to help small businesses prepare for emergencies, navigate crises and recover after disasters. While families and communities also benefit from the program's resources and education, its primary focus is strengthening small business resilience so employers can recover more quickly and continue supporting their employees and communities after a disaster.

"Disaster recovery doesn't end when headlines fade," said Kristine Richmond, senior director of Sustainability & Social Impact at WM. "Supporting organizations that help communities prepare, respond and recover is an important part of our approach to disaster philanthropy and community resilience."

When TEXSAR received WM's contribution, leaders knew the organization faced a long and complex recovery effort that would require significant resources.

As national attention focused on the disaster, donations came from across the country. While that support helped meet many immediate needs, TEXSAR appreciated that WM's contribution could be used when and where it was needed most, whether supporting the 2025 flood response or helping the organization prepare for future disasters.

"The donation allowed us to exhale," McInnis said. "We didn't have to worry about how we were going to figure it out. We could focus on taking care of business."

Once immediate response needs were met, TEXSAR was able to direct a portion of the funding toward long-term readiness, including equipment maintenance, training and operational support.

"If we're not responding to an emergency, we're getting ready for the next one," McInnis said. "That's what WM's

flexibility provided us, whether we are responding or preparing to respond. While the major events get a lot of attention, our daily efforts include ongoing training, exercising skills and equipment, and deploying on a myriad of missions. All of this helps us prepare for the major events."

Courtesy of TEXSAR: Search and rescue volunteers coordinate mission assignments as part of the response to the 2025 Texas Hill Country floods.

How is TEXSAR serving communities across Texas?

Founded in 2004 by six volunteers, TEXSAR has grown into the nation's largest independently funded volunteer search-and-rescue organization, with close to 800 members and nearly 400 deployable volunteers serving all 254 Texas counties and occasionally supporting missions beyond state lines, when requested.

Its capabilities include:

- Search and rescue
- Flood and water response
- Missing persons investigations
- Community support operations

The organization responds only at the request of local, state and federal agencies.

"We never self-deploy. We never charge for our services, and we don't take government funding," McInnis said.

Demand for TEXSAR's services continues to grow. In 2025, the organization responded to 269 missions, more than double the 125 expected. By mid-2026, it had already completed nearly 200 missions.

For TEXSAR, that growth is not viewed as a milestone to celebrate, but as a responsibility to uphold.

"We don't see growth in members, missions and support as bragging rights," McInnis said. "We see it as a higher level of responsibility."

Courtesy of TEXSAR: Volunteers deploy by boat to support search, rescue and recovery efforts following the 2025 Texas Hill Country flooding.

Why don't TEXSAR volunteers consider themselves heroes?

TEXSAR volunteers come from all walks of life, including retirees, business owners, engineers, healthcare professionals, first responders and veterans.

"The commonality in their DNA is a call to serve," McInnis said.

That commitment often places volunteers alongside people coping with the loss of homes, belongings and, sometimes, loved ones.

During the Texas Panhandle wildfires, a TEXSAR volunteer offered water and supplies to a rancher who had suffered devastating losses. What he needed most, McInnis recalled, was someone willing to listen.

Despite the organization's growth and increasingly sophisticated capabilities, McInnis says TEXSAR members do not view themselves as heroes.

"If you want to rankle a TEXSAR member, call them a hero," he said.

Instead, he describes them as humble servants – ordinary people who step forward when communities need help

most.

Their goal is not recognition.

"We don't bring closure," McInnis said. "We bring answers. We bring answers to families, answers to law enforcement and answers to communities."

Inspired by TEXSAR's story?

➔ Visit **TEXSAR.org** to learn how to become a volunteer or make a donation to support search-and-rescue, disaster response and recovery efforts across Texas: <https://www.texasar.org/>

To learn more about how WM is helping support thriving communities through strategic investments, volunteerism and community partnerships, visit **Communities are Thriving**: <https://sustainability.wm.com/communities-are-thriving/>

You can also explore WM's broader sustainability, social impact and community initiatives by downloading the **2026 WM Sustainability Report**: [Sustainability Home](#)

<https://mediaroom.wm.com/Supporting-Community-Resilience-WM-Helps-TEXSAR-Stay-Ready>