



Governor's Office of Homeland Security  
and Emergency Preparedness

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 30, 2008

Department of Health and Hospitals News

### **Volunteers Needed for Hurricane Gustav Response**

**Baton Rouge** - The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals-Office of Public Health (DHH-OPH) is seeking volunteers to help in pre and post-storm emergency activities.

Those interested in assisting are asked to sign up with Louisiana Volunteers in Action (LAVA), the DHH's volunteer management program. Prospective volunteers should register at [www.lava.dhh.louisiana.gov](http://www.lava.dhh.louisiana.gov). DHH-OPH volunteer coordinators will then call registered volunteers with information on when and where to report.

Volunteers don't have to be medical professionals. DHH-OPH officials are asking anyone who registers to be ready to assist. Those who register may be assigned to help at a Medical Special Needs Shelter or at the state's bus triage operation. Non-medical volunteers may be asked to feed patients or perform clerical tasks. Medical volunteers will be involved in direct patient care.

According to OPH Assistant Secretary M. Rony Francois, M.D., MSPH, Ph.D, "Volunteers are the backbone of our response to emergencies like hurricanes. Louisiana could not have made it through the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita without the dedication and selfless service of volunteers." Following the 2005 hurricanes, more than 8,500 volunteers assisted DHH and the storm victims.

The LAVA web site was launched in December 2007 to recruit and train volunteers to assist in responding to state emergencies.

For the latest on Hurricane Gustav, you can visit [emergency.louisiana.gov](http://emergency.louisiana.gov) or call the state's emergency hotline at 1-866-288-2484 to listen to a recorded message with the most up-to-date information.

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