



"Aiding Reservations Too Remote to Reach"

Jan 16, 2012, Rapid City, SD – National Relief Charities (NRC) is issuing a call for aid to cover the cost of transporting goods to tribal programs located on remote reservations in 12 states.

[National Relief Charities](#) is a nonprofit dedicated to quality of life for Native Americans living on poverty-stricken reservations. NRC has been serving Indian country for over twenty years, but in that time, the landscape has changed significantly. Today, the cost of living is higher than ever, requests for aid from the reservations are up, and donations for many nonprofits are down. This means there are more people to serve at a higher cost.

In addition, one fact that has remained unseen and unfelt by mainstream America is that tribal economies on many reservations have been depressed for decades — at levels far worse than the US recession that began in 2008. This has led to scores of Native American families living at sub-poverty levels with basic needs going unmet. This is unacceptable and NRC feels a responsibility to help close the gap on the disparity for tribes in need. NRC strives to do this 52 weeks a year by providing a broad range of support to tribal diabetes and health programs, shelters, nutrition and senior centers, and colleges in MT, SD, MN, AZ, NM, and other states. NRC also provides disaster relief.



Over more than two decades, National Relief Charities has evolved its services and developed a way of working that is effective in Indian country. This is reflected in our long-lasting partnerships with tribal programs and other programs on the reservations, where there is mutual trust. When over 1,200 program partners are asked how NRC is doing, their feedback is consistent: National Relief Charities is making a difference. Yet this also means that NRC needs to be able to continue its shipments and capacity building.

NRC's partners on the reservations report being:

- 89% more effective in meeting their program goals
- 90% helped to provide a higher quality of service for their participants
- 91% saved in funding that can be used in other areas of their program
- 92% satisfied with quality of products from NRC

"I have worked with National Relief Charities for over 10 years as a Program Partner and volunteer. I am a Supervisor with the Rosebud/Treasure WoRC Program on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in Lame Deer, MT. The people we work with are far below the poverty level and struggle to meet daily needs and to purchase necessities that most of us take for granted... I cannot find the words to express how important NRC has been for our clients... people are not just "given a free hand out," yet the clients receive the help they so desperately need."
(Shirley S., NRC Partner)

NRC's positive impact is good news for the social programs that serve the American Indian people. At the same time, the growing need and the rising cost of meeting the need is a challenge. **Definitely, for NRC, the greatest challenge is rising fuel costs and the cost of stocking inventory to have on hand for disaster relief.**

National Relief Charities incurs a significant cost each year trucking needed goods from our distribution centers directly to the doorsteps of our reservation program partners. For the remote communities that NRC serves, access is a major barrier. Limited jobs, transportation, and stores create added hardships in a stressed economy and make it difficult to meet basic day-to-day needs. Providing this transportation free of charge to the reservations helps alleviate their problem of access. It is critical that NRC be able to continue doing this — rising fuel prices make it tough.



NRC operates two 40,000 sf distribution centers: Rapid City, SD and Phoenix, AZ

Besides ongoing support, reservation programs call on National Relief Charities for disaster relief when traditional relief channels fail or take too long to respond. NRC makes a significant investment to have inventory in stock and trucks road-ready for deliveries of nonperishable food, bottled water, emergency blankets, batteries, flashlights, and other supplies for emergencies and winter readiness. Pre-stocking this inventory enables NRC to provide rapid relief after blizzards, flooding, tornadoes, and issues such as contaminated water, frozen pipes,

and impassable roads that affect entire communities, often as the first responder there. Last year, NRC helped 8 reservations with 15 such emergencies. But disaster relief readiness takes dollars too.

Because of the high need on the reservations and a commitment to tribal [partnerships](#), it is important for NRC to be consistent in its services and to be a reliable [resource](#). The nonprofit maintains relationships with each partner to understand the specific needs in their communities and to provide the right products at the right time. NRC provides only new, high quality items that are requested by our partners — including clothing and basic items that people might otherwise go without, like shampoo, toilet paper, and toothpaste that seem like luxury items on a tight budget.

“I have been involved with NRC for over 20 years... [NRC] takes care of thousands of people, who without them would go hungry, have no school items, shampoo, and much much more. What I like about them is they take care of the elderly in some of the most remote areas on the Navajo Nation. Without them, some people would have no Thanksgiving, Xmas, or Easter dinners... They are tireless in their work, and really fill a void not only on the Navajo Nation, but other Reservations.” (Larry J., NRC Partner)

Scores of Indian people on over 75 [reservations](#) are assisted by National Relief Charities. **What NRC needs is operating support, including dollars to cover the cost of fuel for deliveries and the cost of inventory for disaster relief.** The organization is interested in hearing from any tribes that are in a position to help cover these costs, so that NRC may continue to serve tribes in need on remote reservations.

For more information about National Relief Charities, visit www.nrcprograms.org.

For information about NRC transport and operations, please call 866-556-2472 or send an email to Operations@nrc1.org.

