

# 'Biblical' Floods Leave Thousands Homeless

Some of the worst flooding in Colorado history has claimed the lives of at least six people, left hundreds unaccounted for and thousands homeless, causing the **Billy Graham** Rapid Response Team to deploy to the Rocky Mountains.

With rains falling through the weekend and most areas suffering from a sudden surge caused by 15 inches of rain, mudslides have complicated an enormous disaster area from Fort Collins to Colorado Springs.

"It's the worst that anyone has ever seen," says Al New, Rapid Response Team manager of deployments and operations. "They're calling it their 100-year flood."

Nineteen counties remain under high threat of flooding, with the towns of Longmont and Lyons—where two people have died—taking particularly hard hits, according to New. Parts of Interstate 70 and Interstate 25 were shut down.

"There's a lot of people missing, but they're not able to get into these areas because of the mudslides, and the roads are washed out," New says. "They can't get helicopters in."

Boulder has seen virtually every waterway flooded, washing away roads, bridges and homes in all parts of Boulder County. Evacuations were ordered for 4,000 residents along Boulder Creek.

"You're looking at Boulder, Fort Collins, Aurora, Longmont, Lyons," New says, rattling off just some of the cities devastated.

New and his wife, Toni, deployed to Colorado on Saturday to assess the situation along with Samaritan's Purse. The Rapid

Response Team will likely bring out chaplain coordinators sometime this week and volunteer chaplains soon thereafter to help minister to the emotional and spiritual care of those devastated by the massive floods.

“We’ll be looking to see where we can set up our base camp,” New says.

Colorado has seen more than its share of disasters in the past several years. The Rapid Response Team has deployed to wildfires in both 2012 and 2013 and had chaplains at the scene of the Aurora movie theater the morning after the shooting tragedy.

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