

Operation Blessing International Deploys Large- Scale Water Purification Equipment to Puerto Rico

Operation Blessing International has deployed an array of water purification equipment to Puerto Rico, as most residents still do not have access to safe water following Hurricane Maria.

The humanitarian organization, which arrived in Puerto Rico just as Hurricane Maria departed, has deployed nine AQUA WHISPER PRO Model 1800-2 water purification units to the island and is now setting them up in communities selected by local officials. These reverse osmosis desalination units are capable of purifying sea water, brackish water or fresh water at a rate of 1,800 gallons a day, per unit (16,200 gallons per day combined). Each unit is powered by a Kohler 9kw gasoline generator, which Operation Blessing flew into Puerto Rico from the Kohler facility in Wisconsin. The San Juan government is supplying the gasoline, which is in short supply on the island, to Operation Blessing.

In addition to the large-scale purification equipment, Operation Blessing is also distributing 50,000 AQUA-TAB water purification tablets as well as 30 H2Go portable chlorine generators. Each H2Go unit is powered by lithium-Ion battery and can be charged with either USB plug-in or solar power. Each unit is capable of purifying 80 gallons of water on a single battery charge and by using only common table salt.

David Darg, vice president of international operations for Operation Blessing International, said, "This is one of the most challenging disasters I have ever seen; It's really

shocking to be working this long after a disaster and still have people who are unreached. There are entire communities we're hearing about that still haven't been accessed with anything due to landslides or trees blocking the roads," Darg said.

To assist with the charity's efforts in Puerto Rico, Operation Blessing also deployed three bilingual disaster relief experts: safe water engineer Ignacio Romero from the Virginia Beach headquarters, global special projects director Diego Traverso from OB Israel and disaster relief specialist Luis Gomez from OB Honduras. The group has hired several local residents to assist, as well.

Since the hurricane, Operation Blessing has distributed 1,500 solar lights to families without electricity. "These lanterns are a huge blessing to families living without power; they are in darkness and the lanterns bring a much-needed sense of security at night," added Darg. More lanterns have been shipped this week, as electricity is expected to be out for months in some locations.

Operation Blessing is also distributing 1,300 loaves of locally baked bread per day, including 1,000 loaves directly to residents in San Juan and 300 to celebrity Chef Jose Andres, who utilized the bread to feed the elderly.

In addition to the efforts in Puerto Rico, Operation Blessing's disaster relief teams are also currently working on relief efforts in Texas, Florida, Mexico and Guatemala. For more information please visit .