

## MEDIA COVERAGE EXCERPTS

### Haiti Earthquake 2010

*The Washington Post*

*San Francisco Chronicle*

“Agencies Struggle to Deliver Water to Devastated Nation”

by Rob Stein

January 16, 2010

**Water Missions International**, a Charleston, S.C., charity that provides clean water in Haiti and 39 other countries, sent 10 water filtration systems to Port-au-Prince by plane on Friday and was rushing to assemble as many additional systems as quickly as possible.

The 1,700-pound, \$25,000 systems, which can run on diesel fuel or solar power, can purify water from ponds, lakes, streams, springs, wells and other sources to produce 10 gallons of water a minute—enough to supply up to about 5,000 people a day.

“They’re kind of like small municipal water treatment plants,” said Patrick Haughney, the group’s director of international programs.

Although some water purification systems, including those on ships anchored offshore, could turn seawater into drinking water, such desalination systems tend to be much more complicated and expensive to run.

“If fresh water is available, it’s much easier to do that,” Haughney said. “We think there’s an adequate available supply of fresh water.”



*Nightly News*

“Relief Agencies Helping Haiti”

January 14, 2010

Correspondent Rehema Ellis:

From South Carolina, **Water Missions International** is sending 10 crucial units that can purify 10,000 gallons of water a day for 5,000 people.



*American Morning*

“How America Is Helping in the Relief Effort in Haiti”

January 15, 2010

Anchor John Roberts:

And here’s one other relief effort that’s really, really, really desperately needed here in these times. This is **Water Missions International out of Charleston, South Carolina**. They’re sending ten water purification systems into Haiti over the next 48 hours. Each of these systems can treat up to 10,000 gallons of water each and every day. It’s enough to provide the daily needs for about 5,000 people in disaster situations where you ration about two gallons per person per

(over)

day.

Kiran, I saw not these particular units but similar units put into play during the Iraq war in 2003. The Army had them out there. Reverse osmosis units where they literally would stick a hose into a drainage canal and the water was so fetid that you didn't even want to get near it. And they would put them into these big reverse osmosis units, and would come out the other side crystal clear, put a little bit of chlorine in it and you've got drinking water. It only takes a matter of hours to do it as well, so desperately needed supplies on their way into Haiti.



“SC Group Sends Water Purifiers to Haiti”  
January 13, 2010

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) - A South Carolina nonprofit group which works to bring clean water to people around the world is sending ten water purification systems to earthquake victims in Haiti.

Water Missions International says each system can treat 10,000 gallons of water a day, enough to provide for 5,000 people daily in a disaster.

The agency plans to transport the units to Haiti within the next two days.

The portable purification systems have 275-gallon tanks in steel cages that can be put on pickup trucks and taken to remote areas. The units include generators that operate pumps to purify water from ponds or streams.

Water Missions International, founded in 2001, estimates it has provided safe drinking water to more than 1.6 million people in 40 countries.

## **“How to Give Disaster Dollars Wisely: Watchdog Group Offers Help in Knowing Which Charities to Support”**

by Megan O'Matz  
January 19, 2010

Avoid telemarketers and don't give to the Haitian government.

That's the plain-spoken advice one watchdog group is giving to Americans now bombarded with requests from charities to help the Caribbean nation's earthquake victims.

Charity Navigator, a New Jersey-based organization that assesses the reliability of nonprofit groups, recommends would-be donors choose aid organizations with experience working on large-scale disasters and already present in Haiti.

Among its top-rated organizations: the American Red Cross; Americares, CARE, Convoy of Hope, Direct Relief International, Doctors Without Borders, Food for the Poor, Partners in Health, Save the Children and Water Missions International.

Which to avoid? Newly formed outfits, for starters. "Establishing a new charity is hard enough, but in a crisis, the odds of succeeding are slim to none," according to the guidelines Charity Navigator offers on its website, <http://www.charitynavigator.org>.

Also, don't donate to the Haitian government, Charity Navigator advises.

"Haiti is known to be a corrupt country. And news reports post-earthquake indicate that the government is pretty much not functioning," the watchdog group notes.

"The best bet is really to go with organizations that just have reputable names," Alicia Laszewski, chapter executive of the Red Cross in Broward County, said in an interview at a Fort Lauderdale airport, where volunteers on Monday provided pizza and comfort to a group of missionaries returning from the quake zone.

What should you give? The Red Cross and others say cash is king because priorities in the disaster area can vary from hour to hour. At one point, the greatest need may be water. At another, it's medical supplies.

Donated goods must be stored, inventoried and shipped. Whereas with cash, aid groups can buy what they need, often in communities or countries near the disaster site.

While the Coconut Creek-based Food for the Poor prefers cash, it, too, is receiving an abundance of donated goods. Over the weekend, Spirit Airlines flew a load of water into Haiti for Food for the Poor. In addition, "FedEx flew some medical supplies for us," said Kathy Skipper, the charity's public relations manager.

Often, though, aid groups have to pay to transport goods. Food for the Poor hopes to send 400 40-foot containers, each holding 42,000 pounds of food, lumber and medical supplies, to the country. "It costs about \$5,000 a container to ship those goods," Skipper said.

Haiti's extraordinary need, coupled with the outpouring of generosity, will naturally breed fraud, and, as a result, distrust. Already, one prominent aid group has found itself having to defend its practices.

(over)

At a news conference in New York on Monday, Haitian-born rapper Wyclef Jean addressed criticism that his Yele Haiti Foundation, founded in 2005, is closely linked to his for-profit businesses. The foundation reportedly has raised \$2 million since the quake.

"As a young NGO (nongovernmental organization) ... have we made mistakes before? Yes," said Jean. "Did I ever use Yele money for personal benefits? Absolutely not."

Charity Navigator has not yet rated Yele because the group did not file tax returns until August 2009. In response to widespread interest, however, Charity Navigator made a few observations on its blog, saying a 2008 audit showed Yele spent 69 percent of its budget on programs, which is slightly below the accepted standard, 75 percent.

The watchdog group recommended that "donors stick with charities that have experience in providing aid after major disasters," which Yele does not.

Megan O'Matz can be reached at [momatz@sunsentinel.com](mailto:momatz@sunsentinel.com) or 954-356-4518.

###

## “FedEx Aids Charity to Get Water to Haiti”

by David W. MacDougall  
January 21, 2010

Water Missions International, a Charleston-based charity that has been having trouble getting more of its water purification systems into earthquake-ravaged Haiti, got a big boost to its efforts Wednesday when FedEx chartered a cargo flight to Port-au-Prince.

"This is the most exciting day for us," said Molly Greene, who founded Water Missions with her husband, George, in 2001. Water Missions is a Christian, nonprofit organization that provides safe drinking water to people in developing countries and disaster areas.

"Haiti needed clean water before the earthquake," Greene said. The need is even greater now.

As Greene was speaking, volunteers were loading a pair of FedEx trailers parked outside the group's West Ashley office with Living Water Treatment Systems. Each system was packed in four separate palletized crates. Two of the crates hold water tanks. The other two hold equipment.

Each system can clean up contaminated surface water and generate 6,000 gallons of drinkable water a day, Greene said. They can be set up to run on solar power.

Using forklifts, the volunteers had to be careful to load the trailers so that all four crates for each system were packed together.

The total weight for each system is about 1,600 pounds, said Jerry P. Miner, Water Missions vice president for disaster response. The two FedEx trailers were to haul 10 systems to Miami, where they were to be loaded onto a flight directly to Port-Au-Prince, he said.

FedEx has been a strategic partner with Water Missions for years, and has been helping the group get treatment systems to Miami since the 7.0- magnitude quake rocked Haiti on Jan. 12. "But this time, they are funding the whole project," Greene said.

Adam Spurlock, an account executive for FedEx in Charleston, said the company was proud to support Water Missions. He said the regular air freight cost of transporting one treatment system would be about \$10,000. Then there would be \$2,000 or so for ground transportation, he said. For 10 systems, the transportation cost would exceed \$100,000, he said.

There have been widely reported logistical problems getting aid into Haiti, Greene said, which have affected Water Missions. Also, the group has said it would prefer that C-17s leaving Charleston Air Force Base transport the systems. But Water Missions was told that military flights have been dedicated to other supplies.

Since the quake, Water Missions has sent systems into Haiti on flights arranged by larger charities, such as Samaritan's Purse and Operation Blessing. "This is the first actual flight for Water Missions International since the earthquake," Greene said of the FedEx flight.

Water Missions had already been operating several water treatment systems in Haiti before the earthquake. One in Jacmel was deployed in 2008 after the island was struck by a hurricane, Miner said.

(over)

Relief coordinators in Haiti have asked Water Missions to set up one of its systems near Haiti's border with the Dominican Republic, Miner said. "A lot of the people are fleeing to the Dominican Republic," he said.

There were four Water Missions employees who were already stationed in Haiti, and they came through the earthquake without injuries, Miner said.

They also survived Wednesday's aftershock, which occurred around sunrise while many were sleeping.

###