



Switch to Affinity.
All the services of a bank, without the bank.

Learn More



Thousands of Jersey Shore residents still not home 4 years after Sandy

By Dianne DeOliveira October 7, 2016 3:15 AM

f Share on Facebook

Share on Twitter

As the four year anniversary of Superstorm Sandy approaches this month, a number of impacted families from Monmouth and Ocean counties remain displaced.

“Of the 260,000 households that were affected by the storm, there are still several thousand that have not been able to return home,” said Maureen Mulligan, executive director for Coastal Habitat for Humanity based in Spring Lake Heights.

Finances are the main reason, according to Mulligan.

“Many of them are still in negotiations with FEMA and their insurance companies, and so they very often just simply don’t have the money necessary to rebuild after losing their homes,” Mulligan said.

Lack of funding also is forcing many Sandy-related charities to dry up, or move away from disaster recovery, like Coastal Habitat for Humanity.

“The reason for that is finances. There is not the type of financial support that was available for the first three years, and so if you look at the number of agencies that were helping for the first three years verses today, there’s very little support for folks today, very little support,” said Mulligan.

About a dozen agencies remain, and Mulligan noted that they’re not committed solely to Sandy recovery. Salvation Army, Catholic Charities and Saint Vincent de Paul are among the agencies that Mulligan said have a wide array of services and will continue to do some case management with Sandy-impacted families.

“But, there are not the kinds of support out there that there were just a few years ago,” added Mulligan.

Mulligan pointed out that on one hand it is understandable because resources are being allocated to other parts of the United States that also have been struck by disaster, but at the same time there are still thousands of people who have not returned home and who really do need help.

“Primarily they have moved out of hotels because there’s not the funding for that anymore, and either are living with families or found a small rental that they could move into, but they are not home,” said Mulligan.

Coastal Habitat for Humanity is no longer working strictly on homes that were affected by Sandy, but Mulligan noted that as part of the agency’s Neighborhood Revitalization Program, a home belonging to a Sandy victim that needs rehab would be included.

Mulligan pointed out that some Sandy-impacted families have been forced to live apart because their homes still haven’t been repaired or rebuilt four years later.

She said areas still in need of serious help include Manasquan, Lake Como and the Shark River Hills section of Neptune.

“Many of the homes, especially in the Shark River section of Neptune, were damaged by Irene, and then were re-damaged by Sandy, and still have not been able to recover,” Mulligan said.

Sandy also has prompted a number of counties directly impacted by the storm to plan better for future disasters by forming Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. Mulligan said agencies have been developing better plans so they aren’t caught off guard like they were with Sandy.

Mulligan suggested residents also have preparedness plans and know the agencies and resources available in the event of a disaster.



Kena Betancur, Getty Images

A complete list can be found here: <https://njvoad.communityos.org/cms/home>.

Contact reporter Dianne DeOliveira at Dianne.DeOliveira@townsquaremedia.com.