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SMALL BUSINESS

Americans Open Up Hearts and Wallets for Oklahoma Tornado Victims

It may be tax-deductible, but that's not why Americans give to charities that help other Americans hit by tragedies.

Isaac M. O'Bannon • May. 22, 2013



As the search for survivors in the [tornado-ravaged](#) city of Moore, Oklahoma ends, and the city and state start to rebuild, communities, organizations and churches across the country are rallying to provide relief supplies and funds to help.

Those donations may be tax-deductible, but that's not why Americans give to charities that help other Americans hit by tragedies.

I live about 6 miles from the devastation in Moore. As editor of [CPA Practice Advisor](#), a national publication mostly for accounting and tax professionals, I read through many national and local publications across the country on a daily basis. Today, however, I noticed an incredible number of articles from small to large cities in every part of our nation that were about local groups helping raise funds for relief efforts.

It started with random efforts. Our managing editor, Jill Burnett, got our parent company and publisher [Cygnus Business Media](#) involved. In their Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, offices, our colleagues have set up donation bins and promoted donations.

Then, there is a [Miami Herald article](#) with several links to local groups; and there's an article about [media companies in Kentucky](#) joining forces to help a fundraising drive.

To million dollar donations by Oklahoma City Thunder [basketball player Kevin Durant](#) and also by [Cox Enterprises](#).

To an article from the [Tulsa World about churches helping](#), as well as articles [like one from the Winston-Salem Journal](#) in North Carolina, reminding people to be on the watch for charity scams.

There were many additional articles in our nation's newspapers and online news sources today that mentioned the Moore tornado and also offered advice for donating either locally or nationally.

This is the power of good, the power of a national community. I thank you, Oklahoma thanks you, and our nation is a better place because we care about each other, even when hundreds or a thousand miles apart.

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For those in other states who think “Okies are crazy” for living with the threat: **I am an Oklahoman**, not by birth, but by choice for more than 25 years of my life. My father was a meteorologist with the National Weather Service for almost 30 years. I

took an undergraduate meteorology class at the University of Oklahoma. And I've never seen a tornado.

But my home in Norman, Oklahoma, is about 6 miles from the tragedy that hit Moore, Oklahoma, on Monday, and in 2003, and in 1999. A tornado came within 100 yards of my home about a year ago, while I was out of town.

I am originally from California, and experienced the 1994 Northridge earthquake while in the Navy and stationed near Ventura. I've lived in Brownsville, Texas and have experienced a hurricane. Comparatively, tornadoes are massive destruction on a pin-point. A tornado is much worse than most earthquakes and hurricanes, but much more focused. And, therefore, much less likely for somebody even in Oklahoma to experience than an earthquake or hurricane.

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