

Not long after search and rescue missions ended, did volunteers start showing up in the affected communities.

The amount of volunteers has delighted the officials who are over-seeing the clean-up process. They hope the outpouring continues.

“We don’t want the communities to be forgotten,” said Michial Compton, who is incident commander for Henryville Command Post. “Often times after natural disasters, once the news media leaves, the volunteer effort dwindles down.”

What Compton said they don’t want to happen is for people to just show up without being accounted for.

“In registering not only are we able to account for them, but we are also able to send them places where they can be utilized in the areas with the most need,” he said. “If they just go and don’t register, they could show up in the same areas and then we will be touching the same footprint instead of making progress. As long as they register prior to deployment the efforts will be better for everyone.”

Compton estimated that over last weekend more than 5,000 volunteers were at work in the communities that were hit by the March 2 storms. He said those volunteers accounted for more than 15,000 hours of work.

“The volunteers have done an incredible job,” said Arvin Copeland with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. “We will continue to need volunteers for many, many months to come. We are asking, however, that volunteers register with local efforts so they can be coordinated.”

Volunteers can register at the one-stop shop at Ivy Tech, in Jeffersonville at 723 North Spring Street and at Henryville on 3002 Murphy Road.

Those who are unable to help with labor, but want to give are encouraged to do that, as well.

Melissa Burton said the donation center at Pekin United Methodist was filled to capacity with donations as of Monday afternoon, but those wanting to donate can give money or gift cards.

Compton said the biggest need right now is money.

“The folks of the affected towns are still hurting and they do need assistance,” he said. “They have asked that they don’t receive any more clothing. They have received truck loads of clothing. They are looking for funding at this time. Those wishing to make a donation should do so to legitimate groups and organizations.”

Disaster relief funds have been set up in both Clark and Washington Counties.