

The state and federal entities have hit the ground running, but locally community businesses and organizations have been working since the tornado on March 2 left town.

Local offices are coordinating volunteers, running the distribution donation center and many businesses have volunteered their services.

Those affected by the tornado were given an update at a joint meeting at Eastern High School. As far as clean up County Commissioner David Brown said Partains has put two dumpsters in the area for scrap metal.

“All the metal you can gather, just take to one of those locations and put it in the dumpster,” Brown said. “Brad (Partain) is taking and selling it and all the proceeds come back to the Washington Disaster Relief fund.”

County Emergency Management Coordinator said if there is a need for a dumpster in a certain area, it’s possible one can be delivered.

“If you need a dumpster for your site, we are not putting them on every property, but we are trying to get them in a area that’s close where residents can bring the metal and put it,” Alexander said. “Right now we have one on Robb’s Lane and one on Daisy Hill. If you do have an area where you would like one, let us know.”

Officials also talked about the donation centers.

The activity center at Pekin United Methodist Church has been turned into donation headquarters and the Pierce-Polk Fire Department is housing hardware items.

Melissa Burton, who has coordinated the donation center from the early morning hours of March 3, said most needs of storm victims can be met.

“Please come, because that’s what it’s for,” Burton said. “If you can’t come, call us and we will get it to you. We have sub-stations at Daisy Hill for the residents that can’t get to us or are just a little afraid of leaving.”

Alexander agreed, “We’ve got just about any items you guys would need and we just need to know what you need and what your continuing needs are so we can be assistance to you.”

Burton said the donation center has not been taking furniture for lack of a place to store it, but she said they have been taking names and numbers from people with furniture to donate.

“For anybody who will need furniture we have compiled a list – a notebook completely full of people who want to donate gently used furniture,” she said. “We don’t have anywhere to store it, so when we hear of a need we will arrange to have it delivered.”

Last week the donation center changed hours from 4-8 p.m. Monday through Friday and will be open longer on the weekends.

She said if there is a need outside of the hours to just call her at 812-896-6209 and she will arrange to have someone be there.

Alexander and the EMA is also registering and keeping track of the volunteers.

She said just among the volunteers who have registered there have been 1,500, but she knows there are many more who haven’t registered.

Alexander reiterated that no request is unimportant.

“If you need any more help, please let us know,” Alexander said. “We will continue to make

contact with you to see where you are at. You may not need help right now, but as you start to rebuild you may need some volunteer help. We are here to help you in any way we can. The volunteers are pouring in from all over and they want to help.

Alexander said the services of the volunteer can help people move items or just about any other task..