



Gloucester Department of Community Engagement and Public Information

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gloucester helps coordinate large meal distribution effort

Gloucester County Emergency Management coordinated a major food distribution effort on Saturday, working with local faith-based organizations and community partners. Fifty-five turkeys and 80 pounds of chicken were prepared by local restaurants. The food was distributed from First United Baptist Church, White Marsh. The event served over 220 households with over 440 bags of groceries and nearly 3,000 nonperishable items.

In the beginnings of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Peninsula Food Bank gave Emergency Management over 200 frozen turkeys to distribute to the community. Jane Wenner, Gloucester County's assistant emergency management coordinator, said the department coordinated daily brainstorm sessions with representatives from churches, faith-based organizations and civic organizations that the department had already established relationships with. These brainstorming sessions included how to cook, carve and bag the turkeys; how to distribute them; what to give with the turkeys and how to serve the community in the best possible way while maintaining safety and social distancing.

"We reached out and the community reached back in a big way," Wenner said. Restaurants, businesses and civic organizations provided storage and cooking of the turkeys, while businesses and churches offered to collect nonperishable items to distribute alongside the meat.

According to Wenner, each organization gave emergency management a number of those who had a need. U.S. Congressman Rob Wittman, who serves the First Congressional District, also attended Saturday's distribution event and partnered with a group delivering items to a housing development of senior citizens.

Included with the food items, was a booklet of COVID-19 information and a booklet of words of encouragement to help during the pandemic.

Finally, Wenner said the department is already working on coordinating another meal distribution event and added that more organizations have stepped up wanting to offer their assistance. "This is our community – neighbors helping neighbors," Wenner said. "One can make a difference, even one turkey."

For more information about the meals distribution project, contact Gloucester's Emergency Management department at 804-693-1390 or jwenner@gloucesterva.info.



Above, Brett Major, Gloucester's Emergency Management Coordinator, at left, participated in Saturday's food distribution event along with Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers and others, in the photo at right.

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