

## MTNG Operation Hometown Help on the Plateau



During the last full weekend of February 2015, on top of an already significant amount of snow and ice for Tennessee, the Cumberland Plateau was hit with an ice storm worse than any in the memory of residents there. The counties of Cumberland, Overton, Putnam and White were especially hard hit by the storm. Thousands were without power for days that would mount into weeks for some. Basic necessities were in high demand. So, their Emergency Management Agencies (EMAs) put out calls for assistance.

Middle Tennessee Natural Gas was already an integral part of the emergency response in those areas. MTNG crews worked around the clock over the weekend and into the following week to respond to the high volume of calls, keep natural gas flowing, and heat going. MTNG worked with local officials and radio stations to reroute emergency natural gas calls to 911 while phone and power lines were down. MTNG Line Locators worked long hours in hazardous conditions to help keep the folks repairing downed electric and communications lines safe from accidentally striking underground pipelines while they replaced hundreds of poles shattered by the storm. Still, MTNG heard the call for additional help, and answered. After receiving the request for assistance on Tuesday, MTNG set about coordinating additional aid to the areas served by our Crossville, North Cumberland, and Sparta Offices. Plans were quickly drafted, approved and implemented. MTNG employees worked together with local officials, media, churches, civic organizations, and individual customers to help coordinate a heart-warming response to help our friends and neighbors.



- Local radio stations, with our sincere thanks to each of them, ran a press release advising that MTNG offices in Dayton, Gordonsville, McMinnville, Smithville and Woodbury (MTNG offices outside of the hardest hit areas) would collect donations of items requested by the EMAs and deliver them to the distribution points. Special thanks to Doug Combs, of WBRY Radio in Woodbury, who voluntarily recorded the press release as a 60 second Public Service Announcement and sent it back to MTNG to distribute to other radio stations.

- MTNG activated the Emergency Response Trailer affectionately known as the NatMobile, for its first ever use in an emergency. This trailer was designed, developed and made a reality by the Middle Tennessee Gas Distributors Association, of which MTNG is a member as are most natural gas companies in Middle Tennessee. The trailer was set up in Monterey with the goal of feeding the school children in the area; a significant number of whom are on free or reduced lunches at school. Local officials worried kids were going hungry, as they had been out of school for many days, and parents had likely exhausted their home pantries. By Friday, through the generosity and hard work of many, notably Atmos Energy donating \$1,000 of food to get it started, the City of Lebanon for getting the trailer delivered and assisting MTNG in getting it going, the trailer was serving hot meals to ANYONE in the area who needed them; made nutritious and delicious by the Putnam County School System Nutrition Staff and volunteers from the community. Thousands of meals were served to those in need, and food just kept appearing through the kindness of companies like Perdue, agencies and nameless individuals who wanted to help.



- Donations to MTNG Offices FAR exceeded our expectations. **Five** pick-up truck loads **absolutely full** of food and supplies were delivered to the affected areas. At the time of this article, more was still being donated. Our customers dropped off cash and checks to help those agencies in excess of \$1,600 and counting. Special thanks to the Lions Clubs of Tennessee who sent donations from as far away as Houston County,



involving clubs from four of their five Districts in Tennessee. This impromptu response was generated by one MTNG Lions Club Member simply mentioning the effort at a regional meeting on Tuesday night. Special thanks also to the



MTNG customer service employees who donated time to help sort, inventory and ship these donations, as well as volunteers at BonDeCroft Elementary, BonDeCroft Baptist Church, Monterey Pallet, Cumberland Cove Welcome Center, and Cumberland County VOAD who helped coordinate getting supplies to those in need.

- Twenty MTNG employees and family members donated their Saturday to assist in the clean-up effort in the area. Crews in Monterey and Cumberland County cleared downed trees and piled debris for removal. Their help was greatly appreciated by every person they were able to help, including MTNG personnel who had been so busy keeping the gas flowing in Cumberland County that they had not had a chance to work at their own homes yet.

**We Salute our Volunteers:**

Crossville Office: Ryan Williams; Eric Bogle; Doyle Carson; and Gary Turner

Dayton Office: Eddie Morgan; Mark Morgan; and his son Mark Morgan, Jr.; Larry Hinch; and Jonathon Johnson

Smithville Office: Matt Stennett; and his wife Lisa Stennett; Ed Kelley and his grandson Noah Kelley; Henry Roberts; Kevin Hale and his sons Jacob Hale and Michael Hale; Shaun Slager and his nephew Tyler Howard; and Cliff Swoape  
Many more were there with them in spirit, including Smithville's April Gray who donated money to buy the entire crew lunch that day.



**An agency volunteer in Crossville said,  
“Middle Tennessee Natural Gas,  
Your People are Heroes!”  
Well, here at MTNG, we think everyone  
who helped their neighbors is a Hero;  
and we sincerely thank each of you.**

**Natural Gas heats our homes & water, dries our clothes, cooks our food, and fuels our economy; but it is the Volunteer Spirit of Tennessee that warms our hearts.**

**God bless you!**

