

ACS Policy on Responding to Disasters

Approved 11/30/2018

Disasters can have significant impacts on the chemistry enterprise and individual ACS members. In addition to the human suffering resulting directly from disasters in the form of personal injury and loss of and/or damage to property, disastrous events can damage university or industry laboratories and other chemistry-related resources needed to conduct company operations or educate our students. ACS is a membership organization and one that, through its national charter, advances the chemistry enterprise. We accept a role in supporting our affected members, and the companies and universities for which they work and through which they are educated when they face the greatest need.

Scope of Coverage

As ACS is “concerned with the world-wide application of chemistry to the needs of humanity” in meeting its Charter (ACS Constitution Art. III), it will consider providing assistance to ACS members and their communities globally. ACS accepts that gauging the extent of need and providing relevant assistance outside of the U.S. may be more challenging than that provided domestically, therefore, ACS assistance is limited to supporting its members, local sections, and international chapters or university chemistry departments.

Triggers for an ACS Response

Accordingly, following a disaster, ACS local sections, international chapters, or academic chemistry departments seeking assistance should send the CEO a request, explaining the types of assistance required in as much detail as possible.

Criteria for an ACS Response

While ACS genuinely desires to provide comprehensive support for its members and other stakeholders in times of crisis, it (or any other non-governmental organization) lacks the resources to address every need resulting from every disaster. Objective response triggers are more clear, helpful, and consistently applied than those based on more subjective factors. Given its need to rely on an objective trigger, and the experience in assessing disaster impacts developed by U.S. government agencies, ACS chooses to provide assistance in the U.S. following disasters engendering a Federal Disaster declaration. Similarly, ACS assistance will be confined to the areas and regions (typically counties) identified by FEMA as being part of the Federal disaster area. Internationally, ACS relies upon disaster declarations as defined by the US Agency for International Development. ACS reserves the right to exercise discretion in deciding whether to provide assistance and determining the level of response.

Levels of ACS Response

By authority of the ACS Board of Directors, the ACS Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is preauthorized to administer and coordinate ACS’s response consistent with this policy and pre-approved budgeted funds. Depending on the severity and scope of a disaster and the identified level of need, ACS’s assistance may consist of one or more of the following actions:

- Replacement equipment and resources for university chemistry departments/labs: ACS will develop a pre-arranged network of companies and other suppliers willing to provide laboratory equipment, teaching materials, and other educational resources (“resources”) damaged or

destroyed in a disaster. Using a clearinghouse/matching approach, ACS will use its on-line assets to match specific requests for resources with the pre-arranged suppliers of those resources. ACS will facilitate the connection between the need and the supply through this process but will not be responsible for ensuring the quality or delivery of the resources provided by suppliers. ACS will provide appropriate recognition to those suppliers for their role in providing assistance.

- ACS can organize fundraising efforts among its employees and/or volunteers whereby their voluntary contributions can be collected and passed on to those in need.
- ACS will extend deadlines for access to its services and programs, to the extent feasible, for those residing in the disaster areas. These may include but are not limited to those deadlines for funding applications, award recognitions, reports, and meeting abstracts.
- Accommodations may be offered or arranged for products and services offered by CAS and the ACS Publications Division, solely within the discretion of the presidents of those divisions.
- When in the judgment of the CEO there are cases of severe and extended impact of major disasters, ACS membership dues may be waived or their payment terms extended.
- Such other assistance as the CEO may determine meets the spirit of this policy and can be funded within existing operating budgets.

For assistance or additional information, please contact:

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