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News

Washington, Ill., residents hit by tornado in 2013, rally for Thursday's victims



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LeeAnn Shelton

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In the wake of Thursday's tornadoes that left at [least one person dead and seven injured](#), residents in Washington, Illinois, were already rallying Thursday evening to raise funds for the small town of Fairdale, Washington Mayor Gary Manier said.

[Washington was hit by a devastating tornado](#) on November 17, 2013, that killed three people and destroyed vast swaths of the town.

"We were so blessed with so many people coming to our rescue," Manier said Thursday night. "I think the fabric of central Illinois is we try to give back and pay it forward."

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Washington resident Jewel Ward, who grew up near Fairdale, has [set up a fundraising page on YouCaring.com seeking tornado relief donations](#) for the nearby Kirkland Lion's Club.

Ward took shelter in Fairdale after Washington's tornado, she says on the website. "The love and community support [in Fairdale] for those that knew what Washington had experienced was overwhelming," she wrote, saying ". . . now is our time to give back."

As of late Thursday, the page has reached about \$130 of its \$5,000 goal.

Manier said Thursday that he also spoke with Rochelle Mayor Chet Olson's wife, who said several of her friend's homes had been destroyed.

"I can tell you the folks in Washington, Illinois, are thinking about them tonight and sending lots of prayers up north," Manier said.

Unlike Washington's tornado, which happened mid-morning, crews responding to Thursday's storms were working through the dark, making a tough situation even tougher, he said.

"I think come morning we're going to learn more about what the immediate need will be," Manier said.