

Louisville clean-water groups prepare to aid Nepal

Chris Kenning, The Courier-Journal 6:40 p.m. EDT May 5, 2015



(Photo: CJK/ylene White)

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After taking drinking water to victims of two previous global disasters, Louisville's WaterStep is raising money to help those affected by Nepal's recent deadly earthquake.

The group hopes to raise an initial \$150,000 for a mission similar to the one it undertook in the Philippines in 2013, when it trained local groups and non-profits to install purifiers in areas affected by super-typhoon Haiyan.

Some of the areas affected by the April 25 earthquake are in remote regions of Nepal and need access to clean water, said WaterStep founder Mark Hogg.

The 7.8-magnitude earthquake killed more than 7,000 people. Some aid agencies warn that contaminated water and a lack of sanitation could spread waterborne disease. Cholera is already common in Nepal.



A man surveys rubble a day after a magnitude-7.8 quake hit Katmandu, Nepal. Dozens of people who were on Mount Everest remained missing. (Photo: Narendra Shrestha/European Press Association)

That's despite the more than 4,000 aid workers from around the globe already bringing supplies, including clean water and water purification tablets, the BBC reported.

Also responding from Louisville is Water with Blessings, an interfaith organization that plans to send 1,000 small filters attached to a bucket, don't require power and are meant for a single households.

WaterStep, which also provided clean water in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, deploys chlorinators powered by a car battery and can be used for larger populations.



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Lorraine Lauter, executive director of Water with Blessings, said while many in villages already lack access to purified water, the earthquake is crowding people together in ways that make water contamination more likely and the risk of disease greater.

The problem "will go on for months or years," she said.

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