

One day you have a home; the next day you don't

Disaster victims know what that initial shock of homelessness is like. All too soon they also become aware of the long-term struggle involved in getting through the aftermath of a disaster such as the 2011 floods in North Dakota.

Misty Weed and her 11-year-old son experienced the shock when they lost their home in Minot last June. Because of its location, Misty's house was filled with up to seven feet of water on the main floor for 27 days.

"When I saw my house for the first time after the flood, I felt crushed," Misty recalls.

By that time, Misty had put her name on every available list of people seeking assistance, since, like the majority of Minot residents, she had no flood insurance. She also had no income after the flood because she had been running an in-home child care business. Misty was fortunate enough to be able to relocate herself and her son to her parents' house in Minot.

"The wonderful people at Lutheran Disaster Response called me back and came over to assess my house," Misty reports. "When my basement was finally empty of water, they sent over a crew of volunteers that mucked out about three inches of mud. They had to scrape up mud and carry it out in buckets, and rip out paneling, sheetrock, carpets and bathroom fixtures."

After that first cleanout, Misty and some friends were able to pull down most of the main floor walls. Then the people at Lutheran Social Services' Lutheran Disaster Response program sent out a group of main-floor volunteers who helped Misty rip out her kitchen cupboards and walls as well as the hardwood floors and underlayment.

"You're probably thinking this was a group of big strong men, but actually it was a super fun group of ladies in their 60s, 70s and even 80s!" Misty says. "They were farm gals and incredibly hard workers."

After volunteers pressure washed and sanitized the house, Misty purchased supplies so another group could come and "button up" the house for winter. They boarded up broken out windows and placed insulation over the floors so the basement could be heated and walls wouldn't buckle.

Throughout it all, Misty felt propped up by the Lutheran Disaster Response staff and volunteers who helped.

"They went above and beyond—and treated me with such courtesy and respect," she says.

The passage of time since the flood has helped Misty gain some perspective on her situation.

"Ultimately, it's just a house," she says. "I'm okay and my son is okay, and that's what is important. We'll make it through...with a little help." 🐾

healing
with help



Minot flood recovery scene