



Earthquake in Turkey (1999): **1**
Search for trapped people

Awarded: The Federal Chancellor, **2**
Ms Merkel, welcomes members
of THW

THW: More and more women **3**
commit themselves

Volunteers for People in Distress

The Federal Agency for Technical Relief ...

...helps people in distress. Assistance is provided during natural disasters such as floods or earthquakes, for example, but also when there is a power failure or explosion. In the last years, the Federal Agency for Technical Relief has administered help in connection with the earthquake in Turkey (1999), the floods of the rivers Oder and Elbe (1997/2002), the tsunami in South-East Asia (turn of the year 2004/2005), the snow chaos in the Münsterland (2005), the floods in Saxony and Lower Saxony (2006), the collapse of the Cologne City Archives (2009) or the earthquake in Haiti (2010), just to mention a few operations.

The Federal Agency for Technical Relief (THW) is a governmental organisation, which is based on the voluntary commitment of dedicated people; it provides technical relief, mainly at home but also abroad.

People at THW

About 80,000 people commit themselves to voluntary work at THW. That means that they voluntarily undertake tasks for which they are not paid. They are motivated by their conviction and the wish to provide competent help to people in distress. Their commitment to THW implies the affiliation to a community, a challenging hobby as well as new experiences and challenges.

Men and women from all sections of the population are active at THW: Younger and older people, of German and foreign origin; they come from different technical and non-technical professions. Principally, everybody who wants to do this, can join THW; special previous knowledge is not necessary, the appropriate training is provided at THW.

THW's Local Sections

There are local sections in many cities and communities, altogether 668 across Germany. Each local section has its own building and the necessary technical equipment. ➤

Rescue work - one of the **4**
core competences of THW

Earthquake in Turkey (1999): **5**
Search for trapped people

Forest and peat fires (2010): **6**
THW-breathing equipment
for Russia





THW-Youth: Learning 1
from each other

Earthquake in Haiti (2010): 2
Drinking water treatment

THW: A hobby for 3
all generations

Floods in Bonn: Pumps in use 4

Snow disaster in the 5
Münsterland (2005):
THW provides a farm
with electricity

The THW members structure their life at the local section together; there, they receive their basic technical training and regularly practice for an operation. Therefore, they know each other well and know that they can rely on each other. Thus, friendships develop.

The members of a local section meet regularly: on weekdays, in the evening or at the weekend. Therefore, it is possible to combine the commitment at THW with a job.

Children and young people are also welcome at THW! Each local section has at least one youth group where children and young people at the age of ten to seventeen years are introduced to civil protection in a way which suits their age. Besides the technical training and various leisure time activities, the youths can also take part in international exchange programmes in the partner countries. They do not yet participate in operations.

Further information is available on: www.thw-jugend.de.

Training at THW

At THW you can learn everything you need for an operation. Many THW-training courses are certified and acknowledged by the chamber of commerce. Many of the acquired skills are also useful for professional or leisure time activities. In general technical basic training courses, different specialisations are possible, for example in the areas of rescue, electricity and drinking water supply, logistics or management and communication. The range of training includes non-technical qualifications for administrative work, as a cook or in the field of press and PR work.

Training and equipment at THW are free of charge. Nor is it necessary to pay a member fee.

THW Operations

If a local section is summoned to an operation, its members are alerted. They can even be alerted during their normal working hours, as operations are unpredictable and can be necessary in the hours after work or even on holidays.

The membership at THW does not lead to any professional drawbacks to THW-members; according to the law, such a concern can be excluded. They are also insured. During an operation, the salary is paid as usual and refunded to the employer without any hassle. ■



Contact and Information:

