

Home Repair Programs

Northern Ocean Habitat for Humanity offers a variety of home repair programs that alleviate critical health and safety issues while completing necessary home improvement projects for eligible applicants.

“When people live on a fixed income, have medical issues with a high mortgage payment, along with insurance premiums, tax payments, and a high cost of living for basic necessities, there’s no money left for repairs,” Fichtner explained. “We want our seniors to be ‘Aging in Place’ where they can stay longer in their own home while preserving their dignity, safety, health, and well-being.”

The **“Critical Home Repair Program”** helps low-income homeowners who struggle to maintain the structural integrity of their homes because of disability, age, or family circumstances. Critical home repair projects can include water leaks, bathroom and doorway/hallway modifications that are ADA-compliant for walker and wheelchair accessibility, railings and grab bar installations, mold remediation, and more.

The **“Home Preservation Program”** focuses on exterior revitalization and repair services for homeowners who work alongside volunteers.

Northern Ocean Habitat for Humanity reached the milestone of their two hundredth home repair in December 2018 with repairs to the home of a disabled eighty-five-year-old Korean War veteran and his wife in the Lake Riviera section of Brick. Volunteers replaced sheetrock, installed new floors, replaced crumbling concrete stairs, and replaced a deteriorating bathroom. “Many of their accessibility issues were rectified,” Fichtner said. “The family shared their story, made coffee for the volunteers, and interacted with them on a daily basis. That’s a hands-up for sure.”

All applicants for both home repair and home ownership programs must meet income eligibility and other criteria. Many times applications for



The ReStore is located at 1214 Route 37 East in Toms River.

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assistance are completed by neighbors, family members, friends, and community members as the first step to help someone they know who is having difficulty maintaining their home on their own.

Disaster Relief

Northern Ocean Habitat for Humanity helps communities affected by disasters by providing shelter assistance, education and training, and partnerships with affected individuals and families. “While we were active in the community before, our Sandy relief and response really propelled us big time. It was then we realized we were capable of providing so many much-needed critical home repairs,” Fichtner said. With Ocean County being one of the hardest hit communities, we assisted in the rebuilding efforts of over sixty Sandy-impacted homes, most of which included rebuilding after gutting the home down to the studs.

How To Help

There are countless ways one can help Northern Ocean Habitat for Humanity. “For us to do what we do for our community, it takes a village. We cannot do this alone,” Fichtner said.

The ReStore

Northern Ocean Habitat for Humanity’s ReStore, staffed by vol-

unteers, is a retail business with a mission. The ReStore offers fabulous merchandise at great prices with all proceeds benefiting organization initiatives and programs. Everything for sale at ReStore comes from donations. “It’s a win-win situation, because donating to ReStore keeps things out of the landfills and is a major resource for making a house a home.” All items go through a system of checks and balances to ensure everything is clean and in the best condition possible before being offered for sale.

The ReStore is neatly arranged and organized like a high-end home boutique. Browsers will find everything from furniture to kitchen utensils to home and seasonal décor available to purchase at unbelievable prices. “Our customers range from treasure hunters and collectors, to do-it-yourselfers looking for their next table to paint, to people on a fixed income who just need the basic necessities,” Fichtner said. “The reality is we have tons of glassware, but we can’t keep pots and pans on the shelves.” In addition to pots and pans, holiday decorations and bedroom sets are also in high demand. Fichtner added, “Inventory is added daily. We post new items for sale regularly on our Facebook page, and oftentimes they are sold within an hour of the post going live.” Buyers should keep in mind that ReStore items are sold on a first-