



*Local 2003 member Jonathan Williams with his wife Marla, daughter Sevyn and son Jerien outside their destroyed home.*

# IAM Members Survive Disaster

In less time than it takes to change a light bulb, Enterprise, AL, was changed forever when a tornado packing 175-mph winds cut through the town, leaving hundreds of residents, including dozens of IAM members, homeless.

"I looked out the door and saw it coming right at me," said Local 2003 member Mike Proffit. "The roof was gone in the time it took to shut the door and run across the kitchen."

Many members of District

75 faced similar close calls, including Jonathan Williams, who barely managed to huddle his wife and two young children in a hallway before the tornado reduced his house to splinters. "I've heard people say a tornado sounds like a freight train and that's true," said Williams. "But nothing short of an explosion describes the sound of your house being torn apart."

Williams and Proffit were among more than thirty IAM members in Enterprise and nearby Echo, AL, whose homes were destroyed or extensively damaged.

Before the winds ceased, IAM helicopter technicians from Army Fleet Support (AFS) at nearby Cairns Army Air Field prepared Army MEDIVAC helicopters to ferry injured victims to nearby hospitals.

"The tornado sirens were still going off, but the AFS team calmly went about their work, launching one helicopter after another," said District 75 Business Representative Tony Blevins, who helped coordinate the IAM's relief efforts.

Financial help also came quickly to IAM members hardest hit by the tornado from the IAM Disaster Relief Fund. "Our members are second to none when it comes to providing help when help is needed most," said IAM Community Services Director Maria Cordone.

"The Gulf Coast is home to some of this union's most resilient men and women," said Southern Territory General Vice President Bob Martinez. "Their endurance and willingness to help one another in times of trouble is an inspiration to us all."



*Hardest hit was Enterprise High School, where eight students died when the tornado collapsed the building's cinder block walls.*