

10/1/2017

Houston-Area Report

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At the beginning of September, we checked in on garden centers in and around the Houston area. News reports of the massive flooding and general devastation are hard to fathom for those not affected by it.

We spoke with Nancy at Nelson's Water Gardens in Katy, Texas, about 20 to 30 miles outside of downtown Houston. Even for a water garden retailer that was way too much rain to deal with. But all was well with them, Nancy said, with not much clean up required. But she indicated some customers lost a lot, if not everything. Like many of the fortunate, the Nelsons and their crew were out in boats helping their neighbors.

Kevin Berry at Buchanan's Native Plants said that being in Houston Heights, they were up above much of the flooding. Like the Nelsons, they got to work helping others. Buchanan's became a drop-off point for much-needed relief supplies, and at the time we reported this, they collected eight truckloads.

Friday, September 1 was Buchanan's first regular business day since the storm, and "while we're not selling a lot, we are trying to help a lot, which is good for us." Buchanan's hosted a fundraiser complete with music and free food and beer, with 100% of the proceeds going to a local charity. "We wanted the garden center to be as active as it could possibly be," Kevin said. "Everybody in the city is trying to get involved in some way and this is just a piece of what we can do to help."

As for what he's heard about the status of other garden centers in the area, he said as of press time there were a few that were not doing well—and that goes for growers, too. We'll keep following up to see where help may be needed. **GP**