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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JANUARY 26, 2010
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SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY CHALLENGE FROM LOCAL ACCOUNTANTS HELP HAITI AND DEDUCT IT ON YOUR 2009 TAXES

Cooper Norman Certified Public Accountants is challenging businesses in the community to help meet the need in Haiti by sponsoring "Shelter Boxes" thru their local Rotary Club. Cooper Norman has pledged to sponsor three of these boxes.

"I don't know how you could exist in the USA today and not know about the devastation and human suffering in Haiti," says Ron Belliston, CPA, and Managing Partner of Cooper Norman. "The need for creature comforts such as water purification tools, tents, and bedding is intense and immediate. That's why we all need to pitch in."

This week, the IRS announced that Haiti Relief Donations qualify for immediate tax relief. In essence, people that give to charities providing earthquake relief in Haiti can claim these donations on their 2009 tax returns.

DETAILS FOR HAITI DEDUCTION

- 1) Taxpayers who itemize deductions on their 2009 return qualify for this special tax relief provision. Only cash contributions made to these charities after Jan. 11, 2010, and before March 1, 2010, are eligible. Contributions made by corporations are also covered under this new law.
- 2) Includes contributions made by text message, check, credit card, or debit card.
- 3) The new law only applies to cash (as opposed to property) contributions. The contributions must be made specifically for the relief of victims in areas affected by the Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti. Taxpayers have the option of deducting these contributions on either their 2009 or 2010 returns (but not both).
- 4) Taxpayers need to ensure their contributions are going to qualified charities. Most organizations eligible to receive tax-deductible donations are listed in a searchable online database available on www.irs.gov under "Search for Charities". Some organizations, such as churches or governments, may be qualified even though they are not listed on www.irs.gov.
- 5) The IRS reminds donors that contributions to foreign organizations generally are not deductible. IRS Publication 526, Charitable Contributions provides information on making contributions to charities.
- 6) Federal law requires that taxpayers keep a record of any deductible donations they make. For donations by text message, a telephone bill will meet the recordkeeping requirement (as long as it shows the name of the organization, the date of the contribution, and the amount of the contribution). For cash contributions made by other means, be sure to keep a bank record, such as a cancelled check, or a receipt from the charity showing the name of the charity and the date and amount of the contribution.

To learn more about the Shelter Boxes, please contact Cooper Norman or visit Rotary District 5400's website at www.rotary5400.org. **Cooper Norman provides you with the immediate tax information you need to implement and adjust your business's Recipe for Success.** For more information, contact Kymberly Mowery at Cooper Norman, (208) 523-0862.

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