

Food Continued from page 1A

Maj. William Speck, divisional secretary of the Salvation Army. "We're seeing 10 or 15 percent more this year."

"People who are badly off are worse off this year," Speck said, despite improvements in the economy.

About 16,000 families with children will be helped this holiday season with food and toys, through United Way's Holiday Clearing Bureau, 404 S. 8th St., representing about 40 agencies, churches and organizations.

That's 2,000 or 3,000 more families than last year, said Rita Hayden, clearing bureau director. She isn't sure why, but says, "We've heard there were a lot of layoffs at a lot of big companies. (And) companies closing."

Some say contributions to aid the needy have been sufficient to ease the crisis, but others say contributions are down.

Hennepin County food shelves are well-stocked, said Clarissa Walker, president of the Emergency Food Shelves in the county, but the demand has been great.

She said the food shelves have received support from churches, company employees, the Red Cross, hospitals, nurses and Cub Scouts. General Mills brought a semitrailer full of food and clothes to the Sabathani Community Center food shelf, 310 E. 38th St. B. Dalton Bookseller brought a truckload of clothes and food and others "adopted" families, supplying them with food.

However, Sharon Vangness, resource coordinator for the Minnesota Food Bank Network, a coalition of state food banks that distributes food to food shelves and on-site feeding programs, says that it appears that donations are down across the state.

She said help in feeding the poor has come from First Banks, Pillsbury Co., Physicians Health Plan and employees of the Internal Revenue Service.

Evidence of increased demand can be found in southeastern Minnesota, where 75,000 families were helped by the food shelves during the first nine months of 1984. The same number of families were helped on the Iron Range, Vangness said.

She said people who want to help can contact the Minnesota Food Bank Network, whose offices are at the St. Paul Food Bank, 344 S. Robert St., St. Paul.

Merianne Haehnel, emergency services program director for the Emergency Fund Service in St. Paul, said yesterday, "The need is great, and we're not able to collect enough to meet the need."

Haehnel issued a plea for more aid yesterday. She said her office provides holiday gift certificates for turkeys and other meats to about 7,000 families in Ramsey County. About \$5,000 is needed to pay for this year's certificates, she said.

"They say the economy is improving, but it isn't (improving) for people we're dealing with," she said. "People are returning to work ... at lower wages than what they

were previously employed at."

Lt. Gov. Martene Johnson will cut a ribbon Friday at the State Capitol to send off a semitrailer of food, clothing and toys to the Iron Range, said Gail Swanson, a public relations representative for C.O.M.B. Co. in Plymouth. The food was collected at C.O.M.B.'s state liquidation stores, as well as during drives by employees at Super Valu, Armstrong High School in Plymouth, Kraus-Anderson Co. and the Convent of the Visitation School in Eagan, Swanson said.

Little Brothers — Friends of the Elderly in Minneapolis will bring dinners to 340 elderly shut-ins on Monday, then hold seven Christmas Day parties for 800 elderly.

Minnesota FoodShare, a statewide coalition sponsored by the religious community, is planning a March collection drive of at least 2 million pounds of groceries for the food shelves. "We need to emphasize that after Christmas, there will still be hungry people coming back to the food shelves," said Cyndie Tidwell, FoodShare director.