

THERE WHEN YOU NEED US

For over 100 years the American Red Cross has been assisting people affected by disasters. Today, 1.2 million trained and dedicated American Red Cross volunteers, young and old, are helping their neighbors across the country every day. The American Red Cross is committed to making a positive difference by

- Improving the quality of human life.
- Enhancing self-reliance and concern for others.
- Helping people avoid, prepare for, and cope with emergencies.

As a voluntary organization, the American Red Cross depends on the generosity of people for both their time and money to provide disaster relief. The American Red Cross is an independent organization, not a government agency. All disaster relief is given free of charge as a gift from the American people.

The American Red Cross is prepared to respond to hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, fires, hazardous materials incidents, and other disasters. In fact, the American Red Cross responds to more than 70,000 disasters every year. It does not need a government request to move into action. The American Red Cross works in cooperation with the government and other organizations to provide assistance immediately when disaster strikes.

The most well known American Red Cross disaster relief activities are providing shelter and meals to those seeking refuge from a hurricane or flood or in the wake of a tornado, earthquake, or hazardous materials incident. In addition to these services, the core of American Red Cross disaster relief activities is the assistance given to individuals and families affected by disaster. This assistance is geared toward meeting immediate emergency needs.

The American Red Cross enables victims of disaster to resume living independently by providing the means for them to pay for what they need most- groceries, new clothing, and rent to emergency home repairs, transportation, household items, medicines, and tools. The American Red Cross also helps those needing long-term recovery assistance when other resources are not available or are inadequate. All assistance is given on a standardized basis, depending on the verified disaster-caused needs of the individual or family.

The people who provide these services - the Disaster Services volunteers - are a cadre of trained workers ready to respond when disaster threatens or strikes. They come from all walks of life and all segments of the community. They share the willingness to serve and the desire to help those in need. Trained American Red Cross disaster workers might

- Be part of a team that determines the level of damage to homes in a disaster area.
- Work in a shelter or on a mobile feeding van providing hot meals to a disaster-stricken community.
- Interview individuals and families to determine how they were affected by the disaster and how the American Red Cross can best meet their needs.
- Help provide the media with the most current information on the disaster and how the American Red Cross is responding.
- Provide computer, communications, or accounting support.
- Do community presentations to help people prepare for disaster.

What Does the American Red Cross Stand For?

The American Red Cross is part of the International Red Cross Movement. More than 250 million paid and volunteer staff is involved in American Red Cross programs in virtually every country in the world.

The basic principles of the American Red Cross are

- Humanity
- Impartiality
- Neutrality
- Independence
- Voluntary Service
- Unity
- Universality

How Can You Help?

One way to help is to volunteer today with the Capital Area Chapter. As a trained disaster volunteer, you may be called on to help others when they need it most. Another very important way to help is to send a financial contribution to the Capital Area Chapter earmarking it for the "Disaster Relief Fund." Your financial contributions ensure that what is needed can be purchased in disaster-affected communities. The Disaster Relief Fund assures that the American Red Cross can provide assistance to individuals and families regardless of the type of disaster or where it occurs.