



PRESS
Press Room



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AMERICAN RED CROSS REMEMBERS HURRICANE KATRINA **Red Cross supporting survivors and preparing families and communities for the future**

Colorado Springs, CO – One year ago today, the United States braced itself for Hurricane Katrina. What followed was unimaginable in size and scope. But communities across this nation joined the American Red Cross in rising to the challenge of feeding, sheltering and providing emotional support to millions of our neighbors on the Gulf Coast. Now, communities are coming together again to remember Hurricane Katrina, support the survivors and prepare for the future.

Local Red Cross chapters and their community partners were at the heart of the response to Hurricane Katrina, and the Pikes Peak Chapter was no different. Nationwide, the Red Cross served tens of millions of meals and snacks, shelters thousands of people, provided emergency assistance to more than four million people and mobilized nearly a quarter of a million Red Cross responders.

“Our chapter was pleased to contribute to the Katrina response by providing assistance for food, groceries, clothing, shelter, and basic medical needs to 767 families (approx. 2200 men, women, and children) who evacuated to the Pikes Peak Region. Many organizations in our community joined forces to provide help to our neighbors on the Gulf Coast,” said David Just, President and CEO of the Pikes Peak Chapter. “This anniversary gives us the opportunity to thank all of the Red Cross volunteers, partners and donors who gave their time and their financial resources to help those who suffered because of this disaster.”

But the need is still great and there is much work to be done. The Red Cross continues to help Hurricane Katrina, Rita and Wilma survivors through its Hurricane Recovery Program. This program assists survivors with emotional support services; help in planning their recovery and by providing information and referral services.

The Red Cross is also preparing should an emergency happen here. We have improved our disaster relief systems to be better, bigger and faster. We have more disaster relief supplies in more locations across the country. In our own community, the Pikes Peak Chapter has been assigned an Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV) is working to expand and develop local partnership efforts.

“We are reaching out to our community’s, business, academic, civic, technology, faith based and government leaders to make sure that we are all prepared for disaster,” David Just went on to say. “In fact, we have new partnerships in place with U.C.C.S. and the El Paso County Department of Health and Environment and are training more volunteers to help respond to disasters locally.”

The Red Cross has also begun to stage human and material resources for the possible landfall of Tropical Storm Ernesto and will be ready to respond when needed. The American public can help the Red Cross prepare to meet the needs of those affected by disasters by contributing to the American Red Cross National Disaster Relief Fund.

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The Red Cross is also encouraging people to be their own first responders when emergencies happen. Individuals and families can take these simple steps to sustain themselves before, during, and after a disaster:

Get a Kit:

- Build a disaster supplies kit including water, non-perishable food, radio, flashlight and extra batteries for both, a first aid kit, and necessary medications. Store important family documents (wills, passports, insurance policies, deeds, etc.) in a portable, waterproof and fireproof container as part of your kit.
- Prepare supplies for pets and family members with specific needs.

Make a Plan:

- Make evacuation and communication plans.
- Plan ahead for the possibility of becoming separated from your family and friends by choosing an out-of-town contact that each family or household member can call or email should a disaster occur.
- Plan on using the Red Cross Safe and Well Web Site which can be reached through www.redcross.org.

Be Informed:

- Talk to your family about the types of disasters that can happen in your community.
- Follow the directions of emergency officials.

The American Red Cross is where people mobilize to help their neighbors—across the street, across the country, and across the world—in emergencies. Each year, in communities large and small, victims of some 70,000 disasters turn to neighbors familiar and new—the nearly one million volunteers and 35,000 employees of the Red Cross. Through almost 900 locally supported chapters, more than 15 million people gain the skills they need to prepare for and respond to emergencies in their homes, communities and world. Some four million people give blood—the gift of life—through the Red Cross, making it the largest supplier of blood and blood products in the United States. And the Red Cross helps thousands of U.S. service members separated from their families by military duty stay connected. As part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, a global network of 181 national societies, the Red Cross helps restore hope and dignity to the world's most vulnerable people. An average of 91 cents of every dollar the Red Cross spends is invested in humanitarian services and programs. The Red Cross is not a government agency; it relies on donations of time, money, and blood to do its work. Contributions to the American Red Cross may be sent to American Red Cross Pikes Peak Chapter, 1040 S. 8th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80906.

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Pikes Peak region...meet YOUR Red Cross