



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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American Red  
Cross  
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News Release  
NEWS RELEASE

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### Local Red Cross Responds to Spring Storms' Aftermath

**Monday, May 02, 2011-** From the Deep South to the Northeast, the American Red Cross is at work in 11 states to help people devastated by the recent deadly tornadoes and floods. The American Red Cross Capital Area Chapter is deploying another three volunteers to the disaster areas affected by the storms. A local Red Cross nurse was deployed over the weekend.

"The American Red Cross is working night and day in many states across the south to give people what they need in the wake of this devastating series of tornadoes," said Katie Sherk, Director of Emergency Services, Capital Area Chapter. "Right now Red Cross volunteers and disaster relief supplies are being sent to the area from all over the country" she added.

Charley Shimanski, senior vice president of Red Cross Disaster Services, is in Tuscaloosa, Ala., where he witnessed the damage and explained the Red Cross response.

"Our hearts go out to those who've suffered from this tragic event and to those who've lost loved ones," said Shimanski. "You can see the absolutely heart-wrenching damage that's occurred here. The Red Cross has some key top priorities to meet the essential needs of victims."

"Our primary goal is to take care of those affected. First, we've sheltering those whose homes have been destroyed by all this damage," Shimanski continued. "We're also feeding those who have been displaced – and there are countless displaced because of the extensive damage. And we're providing emotional support – a major concern because scores of lives have been lost."

Ensuring people have a safe place to stay is a major priority. Red Cross shelters are currently open in Alabama, Georgia, New York, Tennessee, Missouri, Illinois, Mississippi, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina and Virginia.

More than 1,500 people spent the night in a Red Cross shelter Thursday night. In hard-hit Alabama, 12 Red Cross shelters are open across the state. Red Cross disaster workers, relief supplies, blood products and equipment have been sent into Alabama, along with more than 50 emergency response vehicles and 25,000 ready-to-eat meals. Red Cross nurses and mental health workers have also been deployed to help people cope with the aftermath of this disaster.

The Red Cross is working with its partners around the clock to help people in every affected state, and will continue to focus on making sure people have a safe place to stay, food to eat, emotional support, basic health

services and relief supplies. The Red Cross will continue to be there in the coming weeks as they help residents get back on their feet.

“The devastation to this area is tragic,” Shimanski commented. “I’m humbled to see that Red Cross staff who have damage to their own homes and lives are here volunteering in shelters, helping their neighbors in this great time of need.”

For those who are affected by a disaster in the U.S., registering on the Red Cross Safe and Well website is a way for those in the disaster area to let loved ones know they are safe. Friends and family outside the disaster area can also visit the Safe and Well site to search for messages from their loved ones by using a pre-disaster phone number or complete address.

There are several ways to register or look for messages from those affected by a disaster:

- From a computer, visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) and click on the “List Yourself or Search Registrants” link under “How to Get Help.”
- From a smart phone, visit [www.redcross.org/safeandwell](http://www.redcross.org/safeandwell).
- Call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) to register.

Disaster victims can also update their Facebook and Twitter status through the Safe and Well website.

The Red Cross depends on financial donations to help in times of disaster, both here in the United States and around the world. Those who want to help can make a donation to help support American Red Cross Disaster Relief. To make a donation, visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org), call 1-800-RED CROSS or text the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation. Contributions may also be sent to your local American Red Cross Capital Area Chapter 1115 Easterwood Drive, Tallahassee FL, 32311. 850.878.6080 or to the National American Red Cross, P.O. Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013.

**About the American Red Cross:**

*The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies nearly half of the nation's blood; teaches lifesaving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit [www.tallyredcross.org](http://www.tallyredcross.org) or join our blog at <http://cacarc.wordpress.com>.*