



**American
Red Cross**

Capital Area Chapter

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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News Release
NEWS RELEASE

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Red Cross Launches Relief Efforts for Oklahoma Tornado *Responses Ongoing in Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, Arkansas and Alabama*

WASHINGTON, Tuesday, May 11, 2010 — From the plains of the Midwest to the deep south, the American Red Cross is providing a safe place to stay and relief supplies for thousands of people displaced by tornadoes and floods. Even as relief operations continue full force in Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, Arkansas and Alabama, the Red Cross has opened shelters in Oklahoma after last night's tornadoes.

"These storms have left thousands across the country without homes; without any belongings," said Dan Samborn, Chief Executive Officer at the Capital Area Chapter. "Red Cross disaster teams are in the Midwest and across the South, and will be there for as long as it takes to help people get back on their feet."

Forecasters predict another round of severe weather may hit Oklahoma today, less than 24 hours after yesterday's multiple tornadoes destroyed homes and businesses, left thousands without power, and forced road closures due to overturned vehicles and structure damage. Red Cross workers are providing a safe place to stay, food, toiletries and clean-up items.

Meanwhile, people down south are still tossing furniture and appliances into the street, ripping up flooring and tearing out walls as they work on their homes after last week's flooding and tornadoes. More than 1,100 Red Cross workers from 37 different states have shelters open, are providing meals, and distributing various clean-up items and basic necessities such as toiletries. To date, the Red Cross has served approximately 190,000 meals and snacks, and distributed more than 24,000 clean-up and comfort kits.

The Capital Area Chapter has deployed volunteers and the Chapter's emergency response vehicle to the relief efforts in Alabama and Tennessee. Volunteers are assisting with casework, mobile feeding and distribution of water and clean-up kits to families impacted by the floods.

"As we approach Hurricane Season June 1, the Capital Area Chapter volunteers and staff are prepared to respond to emergencies such as hurricanes and tropical storms in our local community, said Samborn. "Volunteers are always needed and appreciated."

The Red Cross is not a government agency and relies on financial support of individuals and companies in the community to prepare and respond to emergencies in the Big Bend. Financial support enables the Red Cross to be there wherever and whenever a disaster strikes.

To donate to the American Red Cross, donate online at www.tallyredcross.org or call the Chapter at 850-878-6080.

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***About the American Red Cross:** The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; 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 or join us on our Facebook page, blog or follow us on Twitter.*