
March is Red Cross Month 2008

The American Red Cross performs a critical role in our Nation and world by providing aid and support to people in times of urgent need. Chartered and authorized by Congress and with the support of more than 700 chapters across the country, the Red Cross helps alleviate suffering brought on by disasters; collects and distributes 40 percent of our Nation's blood supply; assists our military and their families; and provides international relief.

Red Cross Month

- During World War I, President Woodrow Wilson ordered the American Red Cross to raise funds to support aid to the military and civilians affected by war as mandated by Congress. At that time, the American Red Cross set a goal of \$125 million and in less than six weeks donations totaled nearly \$146 million. This success caused the Red Cross to repeat the March drive during the remaining years of the war and to make it the occasion for annual membership and fund-raising efforts every since.
- As the honorary chairman of the Red Cross, in 1943 President Roosevelt was the first president to declare March as Red Cross Month.
- Each year since 1943, the president of the United States proclaims March as Red Cross Month.
- March is Red Cross Month gives the Red Cross an opportunity to promote its services and celebrate its successes in serving communities across the country

Disaster Relief

- Each year, the American Red Cross responds to an estimated 70,000 disasters, including house and apartment fires, hurricanes, and other natural and human-caused disasters. This year during March is Red Cross Month, chapters across the country will designate a day to honor our dedicated volunteers; our hometown heroes. On Hometown Heroes Day, we will celebrate and acknowledge the contributions of the many heroes for their role in helping to build a better quality of life.
- In 2007, the Red Cross helped handle the largest evacuation in California history during the devastating wildfires, by providing more than 30,000 overnight stays in shelters and more than 360,000 meals.

Volunteers and Services to the Armed Forces

- Approximately 1.2 million people volunteer for the American Red Cross and volunteers make up 97% of all American Red Cross staff. Visit www.redcross.org for more information on volunteering.
- For the next 125 years and beyond, the Red Cross will meet the needs of the public by fostering volunteers who are professional, prepared and committed to the tradition of providing supreme service delivery to our communities.
- Red Cross staff members deploy with our Armed Forces to provide emergency communications and a caring presence to service men and women separated from their families.
- Almost 40,000 Red Cross volunteers work at more than 100 military sites here and around the world, providing services to 1.4 million active duty personnel and more than 1.2 million members of the National Guard, the Reserves and their families.

Preparedness

- The American Red Cross makes every effort to save lives before tragedy strikes, by helping individuals and communities learn to prepare for disaster through training.
- Nearly 11 million people have enrolled in training courses that range from first aid and CPR, to water safety, and use of automated external defibrillators that can save the life of victims of sudden cardiac arrest.

International Services

- The American Red Cross shows the compassion of the American people to victims of disasters and crises worldwide.
- In 2007, the Red Cross partnered with international Red Cross and Red Crescent societies and responded to 26 disasters across 32 countries.
- The Red Cross is also helping to ensure a healthier future for millions of children and families worldwide by fighting measles, malaria and HIV/AIDS.

Blood

- The American Red Cross is a bridge between more than 4 million generous blood donors and millions of patients who need life-saving blood.
- The Red Cross collects, processes and distributes blood to more than 3,000 hospitals and transfusion centers around the country.
- The Red Cross delivers a wide range of high quality blood products and blood donor and patient testing services.