



News Release

American Red Cross of Greater Columbus
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alert: Scam Targeting Military Spouses

June 5, 2007 – The American Red Cross has learned about a new scam targeting military families. The intent of this scam is to obtain personal information by providing false information to military families.

The caller calls a military spouse, identifying herself as a Red Cross representative, and states that the spouse's husband (not identified by name) was hurt while on duty in Iraq and was med-evacuated to a hospital in Germany. The caller states that treatment cannot begin until paperwork is accomplished, and that in order to start the paperwork they need the spouse to verify her husband's social security number and date-of-birth. Should any military family member receive such a call, they are urged to report it to their local Family Readiness Group or Military Personnel Flight.

American Red Cross representatives typically do not contact military members/dependents directly and almost always go through a commander or first sergeant channels. Military family members are urged not to give out any personal information over the phone if contacted by unknown/unverified individuals, including confirmation that your spouse is deployed.

In addition, Red Cross representatives will contact military members/dependents directly only in response to an emergency message initiated by your family. The Red Cross does not report any type of casualty information to family members. The Department of Defense will contact families directly if their military member has been injured.

“The American Red Cross ensures that the American people are in touch with their family members serving in the military by operating a communications network that is open 24-hours, 7 days-a-week, 365 days-a-year,” said Michael Carroll, CEO of the American Red Cross of Greater Columbus. “We hope to alleviate the undue stress that this scam could cause for military families – families that already sacrifice so much,” continued Carroll. The American Red Cross of Greater Columbus delivered more than 800 emergency communications on behalf of military families last year.

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American Red Cross – Add One

The American Red Cross of Greater Columbus is dedicated to helping make families and communities safer at home and around the world. Sustained by over 700 volunteers, the Red Cross provides assistance to nearly 500 families each year after home fires and other disasters strike. Last year the organization trained and educated more than 113,000 area residents in vital lifesaving skills like first aid, CPR and how to prepare for emergencies. The Red Cross also sent more than 800 emergency messages between members of the military and their families. The community transportation program provides rides to medical appointments for seniors and individuals with disabilities, logging nearly 17,000 trips last year. All these programs and more are made possible by the donations of time and money from the greater Columbus community.

Michael Carroll is the CEO of the American Red Cross of Greater Columbus and Michael Schoedinger serves as the board chair.

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