



**American
Red Cross**

of Greater Columbus

NEWS ADVISORY

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For Immediate Release

Weekend's Winter Storm Could Lead to Flooding in Central Ohio ***Get Your Flood Safety Tips From the American Red Cross***

March 11, 2008 – The effects from last weekend's winter storm have the potential to go beyond the record snowfall totals. This week's thaw brings flooding concerns. The onslaught of warm weather has the potential to quickly melt the snow that blanketed the area and cause concern for residents living in low-lying areas, as well as motorists who may encounter standing water in some areas. According to the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness, flooding is the state's number one natural disaster threat and the spring severe weather season is just around the corner.

Preparedness is the first step in preventing damage and injury as a result of these types of disasters. The American Red Cross of Greater Columbus recommends all residents follow these steps to prepare themselves, their families and homes prior to the onset of a disaster:

- **Prepare a Family Disaster Plan** – Check to see if you have insurance that covers flooding. If not, find out how to get flood insurance. Keep insurance policies, documents and other valuables in a safe-deposit box.
- **Build an Emergency Preparedness Kit** – Kits should contain a first aid kit and essential medications; three-day supply of canned or non-perishable food and manual can opener; at least three gallons of water per person; flashlights and a battery-powered radio with extra batteries; and other emergency items for the whole family, including pets. Prepare a personal size kit to keep at work and in the car. For a detailed list of what to include visit columbus.redcross.org.
- **Stay Informed of Warnings** - Listen to your local radio and TV stations for updated storm information. Check with your local emergency management office to see if email and cell phone weather alerts are available in your area.
 - A flood WATCH means a flood is possible in your area. When a flood WATCH is issued move furniture and valuables to higher floors in your home and fill your gas tank in the event an evacuation notice is issued.
 - A flood WARNING means flooding is already occurring or will soon occur in your area. When a flood WARNING is issued, listen to local news programs or your weather radio for more information and advice. If told to evacuate, do so as soon as possible.

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American Red Cross – Add One

“We were very fortunate that last weekend’s winter storm didn’t keep folks in their homes for a longer period of time, without the necessary supplies to keep them safe,” says CEO Michael Carroll. “However, we are in constant communication with the Franklin County Emergency Management Agency and are ready with supplies and volunteers if we are called to assist as a result of any flooding,” says Carroll. “It is also important that residents have a stocked disaster supply kit both at home and in their vehicles so they are prepared for any type of disaster.” Visit columbus.redcross.org for more information on weather safety tips and a list of items for your disaster supply kit.

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 600 volunteers, the Red Cross provides assistance to more than 500 families each year after home fires and other disasters strike. Last year the organization trained and educated more than 97,000 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 more than 19,600 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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