



**American  
Red Cross**

of Greater Columbus

# NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

## **Cost of Recent Floods, Tornadoes and Wildfires Rises to At Least \$30 Million**

*Ongoing relief operations combined with client assistance as residents return home push costs higher; The Red Cross is executing largest disaster response since Hurricane Katrina.*

**Tuesday, July 8, 2008** — The American Red Cross response to massive flooding across the Central United States, combined with ongoing relief operations for tornadoes and other disasters since April 1, will cost the organization at least \$30 million, according to latest estimates. The Red Cross is mounting its largest relief effort since the response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma in 2005, surpassing the Southern California wildfires of 2007.

At the same time, a badly depleted Disaster Relief Fund means that the organization is borrowing funds to make up the difference between this cost and donations made to the fund. To date, individuals and companies have graciously contributed more than \$13 million in donations and pledges. Others wishing to support the Red Cross with this and future disaster responses are encouraged to call 1-800-REDCROSS, or visit [columbus.redcross.org](http://columbus.redcross.org) to make a donation.

The Red Cross is actively helping communities who are still dealing with flood waters through support like emergency sheltering, food, clean up supplies and emotional support. The Red Cross has also begun client casework for those residents who are able to return home, connecting them to services to help get their homes and communities back in order, while offering clean up kits, meals, snacks and water to thousands of people. Dangerous wildfires across Northern California are threatening homes and lives, and the Red Cross is also there sheltering and feeding evacuees and firefighters battling these potentially deadly fires. Nationwide, the Red Cross has dealt with 36 major disaster operations since April.

“In a typical year, the Red Cross responds to about 80 large disasters; but in just ten weeks, we have already responded to 36 major disasters,” said Michael Carroll, CEO of the American Red Cross of Greater Columbus. “A healthy balance in the Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund is critical to assure that any community, including our own, will receive immediate assistance after a disaster occurs.”

All American Red Cross disaster assistance is free, made possible by voluntary donations of time and money from the American people. You can help the victims of thousands of disasters across the country each year, disasters like floods and tornadoes by making a financial gift to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund, which enables the Red Cross to provide shelter, food, counseling and other assistance to victims of disaster. The American Red Cross honors donor intent. If you wish to designate your donation to a specific disaster please do so at the time of your donation. Call 1-800-REDCROSS or 1-800-257-7575 (Spanish). Contributions to the Disaster Relief Fund may be sent to your local American Red Cross chapter or to the American Red Cross, P. O. Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013. Internet users can make a secure online contribution by visiting [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).

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