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NEWS RELEASE

Local Red Cross Assists Storm Victims

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA, October 19, 2007 – In response to yesterday’s tornado and storm system that swept through Pensacola, the American Red Cross of Northwest Florida has been providing assistance to the families and neighborhoods effected by this storm.

Thirty-five trained volunteers have responded and are providing direct emergency assistance in communities and neighborhoods impacted by yesterday’s weather system.

“Many of our volunteers didn’t wait to be called after the tornado touched down. They called us and said they were ready to work,” commented Dianne Connors, Chapter Chair for the local Red Cross chapter. “We also received Red Cross volunteers from other chapters in the Southeast including Alabama and Mississippi,” continued Connors.

In addition to opening a shelter at East Brent Baptist Church on Davis Highway, Red Cross mobile feeding units are distributing meals to the storm damaged neighborhoods. The mobile units are also distributing blue tarps and clean up kits.

Members of the NAACP are partnering with Red Cross family service counselors, visiting some families in these neighborhoods. Sanford Hayes, Pastor of New Life Missionary Baptist Church in Crestview, and Red Cross family service case worker Sonja Sanders visited homes surrounding the Greater Little Rock Baptist Church on A Street. The church was damaged in the path of the twister yesterday. The Red Cross is providing emergency assistance to families in this area that sustained damage.

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With more than 50% of damage assessment completed by Red Cross teams in Pensacola, two houses were destroyed, twelve sustained major damage and twenty sustained minor damage.

“Our teams are continuing to visit neighborhoods throughout the day to assess damage and provide emergency assistance to any families that were impacted by this storm,” said Sam Morrissette, team leader for Red Cross Disaster Assessment.

As a result of this storm, the Red Cross also responded to three mobile home fires in Shalimar and Navarre. The three homes were destroyed and the Red Cross teams were on the scene providing immediate assistance. The families were provided with temporary housing, food and clothing.

Red Cross teams served 460 meals and 2,658 snacks to people effected by this storm system.

You can help the victims of thousands of disasters across the country each year, disasters like this storm, by making a financial gift to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund. This fund 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.

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