



NW Florida Tornado
Disaster Relief Operations
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News Release

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Red Cross Volunteers Continue Relief Response on Two Coasts

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA, October 24, 2007 – From the Gulf Coast to the West Coast, Red Cross volunteers continue to provide emergency assistance to victims of the Pensacola tornado and the California fires.

Red Cross volunteers in Northwest Florida have been supported by volunteers in surrounding cities and states to ensure that those families affected by the October 18th tornado, are getting the aid they need. The volunteers put their personal lives on hold for up to a three-week assignment. They usually work a twelve-hour day – often under hardship conditions.

A total of eighty-four Red Cross workers have provided 3,930 meals and snacks to disaster clients and disaster workers, distributed 246 clean-up and comfort kits and 103 blue tarps and other bulk items to tornado victims. Volunteer teams conducted damage assessment on 251 homes and assisted 119 families through Hotline calls and home visits.

Gathana Parmenas traveled to Pensacola from nearby Tallahassee to assist the local Red Cross chapter. “The Tallahassee chapter sent me here to help – neighbor to neighbor,” said Parmenas, Disaster Assessment Manager. Her teams traveled to the affected neighborhoods conducting damage assessment.

Three married couples worked together in Pensacola this past week.

Wayne and Judy Lintz live in Flint, Michigan and have a vacation home at Pensacola Beach. When they received Red Cross assistance after Hurricane Ivan, they decided to join the team of volunteers.

“Our own Red Cross experience with Ivan was so positive that we decided to volunteer,” said Wayne Lintz. The retired school teachers have deployed to Oklahoma and New Orleans, working in shelters and providing hot meals to neighborhoods affected by storms. They were at their Pensacola Beach home when they heard about the tornado touching down in Pensacola. “Volunteering is a nice way to do something for someone else while enjoying our golden years,” added Lintz.

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Another couple, Cici and Don Ramsey traveled from Houston, Texas and work as a Response Technology Team (RTT). “The people of the Gulf Coast hold a special place in our hearts. We were here providing assistance during Hurricanes Ivan, Dennis and Katrina,” said Don Ramsey. The RTT sets up and maintains the communication equipment for the volunteers assigned to the relief operation.

For the past three years, Roger and Wanda Reetz have been driving Red Cross Emergency Response Vehicles to disasters around the country. Last week, the Mobile, Alabama couple delivered meals to the Pensacola neighborhoods that were in the path of the tornado. “Making a connection to those in need and helping just one person who needs your help, makes this job worth it,” said Wanda Reetz.

These volunteers supported the Northwest Florida chapter’s volunteers for the past week. Some of these volunteers are being deployed to California to assist with the Red Cross relief efforts there. The local chapter volunteers are continuing to work with those in our community that need Red Cross assistance.

Both the Pensacola tornado and the California fires remind all of us of the importance of preparing ourselves for the unexpected. The Red Cross asks everyone to be Red Cross Ready. 1. Get or re-supply your disaster preparedness kit, 2. make an information plan with your family and friends, and 3 stay informed by listening to local authorities and contacting your local Red Cross chapter during a disaster event.

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 the Pensacola tornado, 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 redcross.org.

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