



In Hurricane Ike's Wake, Blood Supply Needs Boost

ST. Paul, Minn. (Sept. 16, 2008) – Call it the Ike ripple effect. Hurricane damage throughout Texas, flooding in Illinois and damaging winds throughout Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio have caused a growing number of blood drives to be cancelled. This is putting increased pressure on the American Red Cross' national blood system to ensure that no patient goes without the blood he or she needs. The good news is that you can help.

The American Red Cross is urging eligible donors to schedule an appointment to donate blood or platelets in the coming days and weeks to ensure that local and national blood supplies can continue to meet the needs of patients.

"It's the blood already on the shelves that helps during times of disaster," said Dr. David Mair, interim CEO of the local Red Cross Blood Services Region. "We need to be prepared to not only provide blood for patients locally, but patients throughout the country. The need for blood is ongoing, despite what Mother Nature throws at us."

Call **1.800.GIVE.LIFE** or go online to givebloodgivelife.org to schedule an appointment. All blood types are needed, especially type O. A blood donor card, driver's license, or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Donors need to be at least 17 years of age (16 with a signed Red Cross parental/guardian consent form) and must weigh at least 110 pounds.

As the Red Cross continues helping individuals and families battered by the 2008 storms and hurricanes, a national fundraising campaign has been launched to raise an initial \$100 million for the Disaster Relief Fund. The Disaster Relief Fund allows the Red Cross to provide emergency assistance to help victims of disasters meet their immediate needs for food, shelter, counseling and other critical services.

For more information about ongoing disaster relief efforts and to help by making a monetary donation, please visit redcross.org or call 1-800-REDCROSS (1-800-733-2767) or 1-800-257-7575 (Spanish) to make a donation. You can also use your cell phone to donate \$5 to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund by text messaging the keyword "GIVE" to "2HELP" (24357). You can send multiple donations depending on your carrier. Contributions will appear on monthly bills or be debited from a prepaid account balance. All applicable text rates apply.

About the American Red Cross

Governed by volunteers and supported by giving individuals and communities, the American Red Cross is the single largest supplier of blood products to hospitals throughout the United States. While local hospital needs are always met first, the Red Cross also helps ensure no patient goes without blood no matter where or when they need it. In addition to providing nearly half of the nation's blood supply, the Red Cross provides relief to victims of disaster,

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trains millions in lifesaving skills, serves as a communication link between U.S. military members and their families, and assists victims of international disasters or conflicts.

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The need is constant. The gratification is instant. Give blood.™