

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**American
Red Cross**

Blood Services

givebloodgivelife.org

American Red Cross Blood Services Supports Blood Needs of Southern California

ST. PAUL, Minn. (October 29, 2007) – The American Red Cross Blood Services national system continues to ship blood products from across the United States into southern California to help stabilize the blood supply in the region affected by the wildfires.

The American Red Cross has provided nearly 2,000 blood products to date to support the efforts of the Southern California Blood Services Region. Blood drives in southern California have been curtailed due to the wildfire situation, and as a result, donations from residents in the area are limited.

At this time, the American Red Cross is able to meet the requirements of its Southern California Region. However, there may be an increase in demand for blood over the next few weeks as area hospitals reschedule elective surgeries which were cancelled due to the fires.

In order to ensure a stable local blood supply, and to help keep the southern California blood supply at an adequate level, it is important for eligible donors to make appointments to donate blood over the next several weeks and keep the appointments they already have.

“While local hospitals and patients continue to be our first priority, blood donations above and beyond what’s needed locally can be quickly sent to the wildfire affected areas to help patients in need,” said Rick Panning, CEO of the St. Paul-based North Central Region, one of 36 regions in the country. “Those who donate blood to the Red Cross in the coming weeks can help patients locally, and patients throughout the country, including southern California.”

Eligible donors can call **1.800.GIVE.LIFE** or go online to <http://www.givebloodgivelife.org> to make an appointment to donate blood. Call 651.291.6718 in the Twin Cities Area to make a platelet donation appointment. A blood donor card or driver’s license are required at check-in. Donors must be at least 17 years old and must weigh at least 110 pounds.

Patients suffering from burns often need transfusions of plasma and platelets and the American Red Cross, along with other blood collection agencies, are providing for this need. In addition, shipments of red cells are being sent to the area to help meet the ongoing needs of patients at local hospitals and transfusion centers until the wildfire situation is resolved.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD SERVICES

The St. Paul, Minnesota-based North Central Region supplies blood products and specialized laboratory services to more than 100 hospitals in Minnesota, western Wisconsin and eastern South Dakota. In a lifesaving partnership with approximately 127,000 volunteer blood donors, 4,000 volunteer blood drive coordinators and 630 staff members, the North Central Region organizes nearly 5,000 blood drives in an effort to collect approximately 240,000 pints of blood each year. The American Red Cross is the single largest single blood supplier in the United States.

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