



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **American Red Cross Responds to Two Fires Saturday**

The American Red Cross Illinois Capital Area Chapter responded to two fires today (Saturday). One fire occurred at 1101 E. 1<sup>st</sup> in Pana; the other fire occurred at 1512 E. Jackson in Springfield.

Red Cross caseworkers met with the affected individuals to identify their immediate needs resulting from the fires. Assistance with emergency needs was provided for the 1 individual affected at 1101 E. 1st in Pana and the 4 individuals affected at 1512 E. Jackson in Springfield.

Every year, between the months of November and March (the months commonly referred to as “Fire Season”) the American Red Cross responds to roughly half of its responses for the entire year. Typically, these responses are to single-family fires. To date this year, the chapter has assisted nearly 40 percent more individuals than at this point last year.

#### **Fire safety tips for the home:**

- Install smoke alarms inside and outside each sleeping area, right outside the kitchen, and on every level of your home.
- Test smoke alarms once a month by pushing the test button on each alarm. If it does not work, replace the battery and test again. If it still does not work, replace the alarm.
- Replace the battery in all smoke alarms at least once a year.
- Replace smoke alarms that are 10 or more years old.
- Draw a floor plan for each level of your home. Pick two ways out of each room. Practice escaping from each room twice a year.
- Plug only one plug into each electric outlet.
- Run extension cords only on top of floors and carpets-not under them.
- Have the heating system checked by a professional once a year to make sure it is in proper working order.
- Have chimney(s) and flue(s) inspected once a year by a professional and cleaned as recommended.
- Use flashlights for emergency lighting if you lose power. Do not use candles.

On average, the Red Cross, Illinois Capital Area Chapter responds to a disaster every three days. Last year alone responding to more than 115 disaster incidents, including 104 house fires, 2 incidents of flooding, 1 winter storm, 1 windstorm, 1 transportation accident, and 6 other incidents, providing emergency assistance to 534 individuals.

The community can help those affected by future disasters by making a contribution the Local Disaster Relief Fund. All American Red Cross disaster assistance is free, made possible by voluntary donations of time and money from the American people. To help the Red Cross continue to save lives, contributions can be made to the American Red Cross Local Disaster Relief Fund by calling 522-3357. Contributions may also be sent to the Illinois Capital Area Chapter P.O. Box 1058, 1025 South Sixth Street, Springfield, IL 62705-1058.