



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 11, 2006

### **American Red Cross - Recovering and Preparing**

**Springfield, IL:** The American Red Cross Illinois Capital Area Chapter is working on the final stages in recovery and moving back into the preparedness mode. The following is information on some of the processes.

The American Red Cross Illinois Capital Area Chapter over the past month responded to tornadoes in March 2006 and the beginning of April 2006. Between the two tornadoes over 750 families have been assisted through the American Red Cross. During those weeks of response to the tornadoes, the American Red Cross continued to respond to single-family house fires that were disastrous to those families who lost their homes in the fire.

The American Red Cross will continue to focus on those clients needing assistance, no matter how small or large the disaster is, however some energy has shifted back to preparedness activities for our community. Typical disasters go through certain cycles that include:

- Preparedness activities before a disaster strikes – Red Cross hosts regular disaster drills and works with local agencies, whether it's for a single-family fire or a major disaster
- Response activities hours after a disaster – local agencies respond within hours of the disaster. The response is spearheaded by the Red Cross and local government organizations
- Response support activities later in a disaster – state and national agencies respond to support the local disaster, which may take days or weeks
- Recovery activities – focusing on rebuilding, economic support and typically are lead by governmental based agencies

To bring back the focus of preparedness activities, today the American Red Cross is hosting a Safe Home program with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency, focusing on preparedness and construction from wind damage.

Also, the American Red Cross continues to locally provide preparedness resources to local businesses through its Business Emergency Planning Alliance. On Thursday, April 13, 2006 the Business Emergency Planning Alliance topic is tornado preparedness and response. This month's featured speaker is Chris Miller from the National Weather Service in Lincoln. Individuals interested in Community Disaster Education activities can contact the American Red Cross to find out more about upcoming programs and activities.

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