



Heart of Tennessee Chapter  
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## News Release NEWS RELEASE

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### **American Red Cross Had 137 Big U.S. Relief Operations in 46 States in Disaster-Filled 2011**

*At home and across the globe, Red Cross relief efforts large part of the scene.*

**[Tuesday], [December 20, 2011]** — The American Red Cross helped hundreds of thousands of people whose lives were forever changed by disasters in 2011, from tornadoes, floods, wildfires and hurricanes in the U.S. to earthquakes and other disasters around the world.

Throughout the year, the American Red Cross supported the people of Japan and Haiti, while launching 137 domestic disaster relief operations in 46 states and territories to help people affected by fires, floods, hurricanes and tornadoes across the United States. In addition, major international disasters included the Japan earthquake and tsunami response and the continuing work following the 2010 Haiti earthquake.

Here in the Heart of Tennessee Chapter, the Red Cross launched relief operations after tornadoes struck the Estill Springs & Huntland communities in the Spring.

“This disaster affected many people’s lives here in these rural communities,” said CEO, Greg King. “Red Cross workers from both here at home and across the country worked tirelessly to make sure people had a safe place to stay, food to eat, and help getting their lives back on track.”

In the United States, the Red Cross opened 1,019 shelters and provided more than 130,000 overnight stays. 27,622 trained disaster workers served more than 6.7 million meals and snacks and distributed more than 2.6 million relief items. Health and mental health workers provided more than 133,000 consultations and Red Cross workers opened 16,752 cases to help people get on the road to recovery.

#### ***Tornadoes, flooding and wildfires ripped across the country***

State after state faced the powerful force of tornadoes in 2011. Devastating winds plowed through many neighborhoods, leaving destruction in their wake. Through it all, the Red Cross was on the scene, providing a safe place to stay, food to eat and supplies to help with the clean-up. The Red Cross helped people affected by large-scale tornadoes in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and Wisconsin in 2011.

A large part of the country – almost 20 states – was impacted by flooding in 2011. The Red Cross launched 27 relief operations related to flooding in Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee and Vermont.

Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee caused the need for relief operations in more than a dozen states. Thousands of disaster workers were deployed and more than 250 Red Cross feeding trucks were sent into neighborhoods to distribute meals and clean-up supplies. In New York and New Jersey alone, the Red Cross provided almost 34,000 overnight stays in shelters and distributed more than 840,000 meals and snacks.

Wildfires consumed almost four million acres across the state of Texas, and destroyed thousands of acres in New Mexico, Arizona, Florida and Oklahoma. Again, the Red Cross stepped in to help in the fire-ravaged neighborhoods, providing a safe place to stay, food to eat and emotional support for those forced to leave their homes, as well as firefighters and first responders.

### ***Japan earthquake, tsunami changed people's lives forever***

In March, a powerful earthquake and resulting tsunami struck Japan, claiming more than 15,000 lives, as well as damaging and destroying buildings, roads and nuclear power plants. Hundreds of thousands of people were left homeless and lives were changed forever.

The Japanese Red Cross responded immediately, distributing food, emergency kits, blankets and supplies. Their medical teams provided health services, while other volunteers provided emotional support and social assistance. More than 80,000 volunteers assisted in operating shelters, helped with clean-up efforts and provided care for the elderly.

Through the generosity of the American people and their donations, the American Red Cross continues to support recovery efforts through the Japanese Red Cross. These include improving living conditions in evacuation centers and temporary homes by providing appliance packages for families and winterizing structures against the cold. American Red Cross funds are also supporting the Japanese Red Cross in building a temporary hospital and rebuilding a Red Cross nursing school dedicated to training specialists in disaster medical care. Additional American Red Cross support will improve the disaster response capacity of the Japanese Red Cross.

The Red Cross depends on the generous support of the American public to assist people affected by disasters. If you would like to help, please consider making a donation today by visiting [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org), calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or texting the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation. Contributions may also be sent to your local Red Cross chapter or to the American Red Cross, P.O. Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013.

### **About the American Red Cross:**

*The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies nearly half of the nation's blood; teaches lifesaving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) or join our blog at <http://blog.redcross.org>.*