



**American
Red Cross**

Heart of Tennessee Chapter

Heart of Tennessee Chapter
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News Release NEWS RELEASE

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Red Cross Responds to Flooding

Emergency Shelters Opened in Smyrna & Manchester

(MURFREESBORO) May 1, 2010 – Due to the intense flooding in the Middle Tennessee region, the Heart of Tennessee Chapter of the American Red Cross has opened two emergency shelters for local flood victims. Red Cross shelters have been opened at the following locations:

- 1) **Smyrna Town Centre located at 100 Sam Ridley Parkway in Smyrna**
- 2) **Coffee County Middle School located at 865 McMinnville Highway**

The Red Cross shelters will provide a safe place to stay, food and emotional support to flood victims. The Red Cross encourages people who plan to stay at the shelter to bring “comfort items” such as blankets, pillows, sleeping bags, and books or magazines. Evacuees should also bring any needed medicines and special items for infants, children and the elderly. Pets are NOT allowed at the shelter. The Red Cross will keep the shelters open throughout the evening and assess the need to continue operating the shelters throughout the day tomorrow.

People rely on the American Red Cross to respond immediately and effectively in any emergency situation, including today’s flooding. The Red Cross responds by opening shelters, preparing and serving meals and snacks and mobilizing trained disaster relief workers to provide these and other services without delay.

And as we’ve witnessed, damaging weather doesn’t just happen in Middle Tennessee. Floods and tornadoes hit all over the state highlighting the need for people to prepare **in advance** for such emergencies. Every family should have an emergency supplies kit in their home containing flashlights, a battery-powered radio, water, etc. Those items are extremely useful in the event of a damaging disaster. After a flood, a family might use a flashlight to inspect their home for damage. They might use a battery-powered radio to listen for instructions about utilities. They might need the bottled water if tap water is contaminated. Flooding is a terribly damaging natural disaster financially and emotionally. But planning ahead is the one sure step to a calmer and more assured response.

The Red Cross recommends that you follow these safety steps if heavy rains and flooding are likely:

Know what flood warnings mean:

- A **flood WATCH** means a flood is possible in your area. During a flood watch, move your furniture and valuables to higher floors of your home. Fill your vehicle’s gas tank in case you have to evacuate.
- A **flood WARNING** means flooding is already occurring or will occur soon in your area. If a flood warning is issued, listen to local radio and television stations for information. If told to evacuate, do so as soon as possible.
- A **flash flood WATCH** means flash flooding is possible in your area. Be alert to signs of flash flooding and be ready to evacuate quickly.
- A **flash flood WARNING** means a flash flood is occurring or will occur *very* soon. Evacuate immediately. You may only have seconds to escape. Move to higher ground away from rivers, streams, creeks and storm drains. Do not drive around barricades. If your car stalls in rapidly rising waters, abandon it immediately and climb to higher ground.

Get the facts you need — before, during, and after a disaster or emergency situation. There is more important information on how to be prepared for flooding, tornadoes, and other emergencies in the [Preparedness section](#) of our Web site.

You can help your local Red Cross assist local disaster victims in our community 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by making a contribution to the Heart of Tennessee Chapter at 836 Commercial Court, Murfreesboro, TN 37129 or online at www.midtnredcross.org

The Heart of Tennessee Chapter of the American Red Cross provides vital emergency assistance to help victims of local disasters in Rutherford, Bedford, Cannon, Franklin, Coffee & Moore counties. Over the past year the Chapter trained nearly 15,000 people in CPR & First Aid, Babysitting and Aquatics training, and provided pre-deployment briefings and emergency communications for over 640 active duty military personnel and their families. Over 13,177 pints of life-saving blood were collected from the community last year. All of these services are made possible by over 320 dedicated local Red Cross volunteers as well as through generous gifts from the local community. To get more information please call 615) 893-4272 or log on to www.midtnredcross.org.

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