



Red Cross Volunteers To Deliver Relief Supplies to Residents Impacted by the Valley and Butte Fires

[Calistoga, CA – September 18, 2015] — Today, the American Red Cross will begin distributing food and relief supplies as people begin to return home when the evacuation orders are lifted. These new services are in addition to the ongoing meals, shelter and comfort to residents impacted by the Valley and Butte fires.

“Red Cross volunteers are loading trucks and traveling to affected neighborhoods with food and supplies. Our disaster workers are doing whatever we can to reach more people who need help,” said Jeff Baumgartner, American Red Cross of the California Northwest CEO. “We understand that people are living in very tough conditions. The uncertainty of whether people will have homes to return to makes this an emotionally draining time. Red Cross mental health volunteers are supporting residents as they learn the status of the homes.”

Red Cross volunteers will be handing out cleaning, hygiene and comfort items in hardest-hit neighborhoods devastated by the Valley and Butte fires when the evacuation orders are lifted. These items include water, snacks, non-perishable meals, and clean-up items such as gloves, buckets, trash bags and dust masks over the weekend.

The American Red Cross is proud to be a part of the community’s response to these devastating wildfires,

working closely with local residents and partner organizations to provide safe and comfortable places to stay as well as access to resources to meet their emergency needs.

Shelters

In addition to delivering relief supplies, the Red Cross is operating the following shelters for displaced residents.

Valley Fire

Napa County Fairgrounds, 1435 N. Oak Street, Calistoga.

• Grace Church, 6716 Live Oak Dr., Kelseyville (As of 3 pm 9/18)

Clear Lake Senior Center, 3245 Bowers Avenue Clearlake (As of 7 pm 9/18)

Twin Pine Casino, 22223 CA-29, Middletown (when Highway 29 opens)

Butte Fire

Red Cross shelters are also open on both the Amador and Calaveras sides of the Butte fire:

In Amador, Jackson Rancheria has graciously hosted shelter and feeding operations.

Calaveras area:

- o Good Samaritan Church, 4684 Baldwin St, Valley Springs
- o Jenny Lind Veterans Hall, 189 Pine Street, Valley Springs

Additional Resources

In the coming days, Red Cross caseworkers will also begin to meet with individuals and families to help them develop their recovery plan and connect them with a variety of resources.

People affected by the Valley, Butte and Rough fires can also (855) 224-2490 to learn about Red Cross services available.

[DOWNLOAD EMERGENCY APP](#) People can download the all-inclusive Red Cross Emergency App which combines more than 35 emergency alerts to help keep the user safe, including information about what to do in case of wildfires and more. Users can find it in smartphone app stores by searching for the American Red Cross or going to redcross.org/apps.

HOW YOU CAN HELP People can help by donating to Red Cross Disaster Relief by visiting redcross.org, calling 1-800-RED CROSS or texting the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation. Donations to Disaster Relief will be used to prepare for, respond to and help people recover from disasters big and small. We respond to nearly 70,000 other disasters every year, from home fires to wildfires and more. Learn more about how Disaster Relief donations have helped people affected by [previous disasters](#) including [home fires](#).

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or visit us on Twitter at [@RedCross](https://twitter.com/RedCross).

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September 16, 2015

TOPLINE MESSAGING

The American Red Cross is helping people in California where large wildfires continue to burn, after already destroying more than 282,000 acres.

- The Red Cross is providing shelter, meals, relief supplies, health services, emotional comfort and helping people plan their next steps.
- More than 1,540 people spent Tuesday night at Red Cross and community shelters.
- According to preliminary reports, the fires in California have damaged or destroyed more than 760 homes. Officials estimate thousands of people are displaced by the fires and about 13,600 more homes are threatened.
- Elevated fire weather conditions are expected in multiple states over the next several days. People should be ready to evacuate quickly and listen to local media outlets for updates on the situation in their neighborhood.

People in the path of the fires should download the Red Cross Emergency App to find out where shelters are located, for wildfire safety information, and to receive alerts for fire weather, red flag warnings, dense smoke and air quality advisories.

- You can use the app's "Family Safe" function to instantly contact loved ones.
- The app also provides lifesaving information on emergency first aid for various situations such as what to do for heart attacks, heat-related emergencies and includes water safety tips.
- Pre-loaded content ensures that guidance from Red Cross

experts is available anytime, anywhere – even without mobile connectivity.

- The Emergency App is available for free in app stores for smartphones and tablets and can also be found by searching for American Red Cross or by going to redcross.org.

People need your help now. You can help people affected by disasters like wildfires in California and countless other crises by making a gift to Red Cross Disaster Relief.

- To donate, visit redcross.org, call 1-800-RED CROSS or text the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation.
- Your gift enables the Red Cross to prepare for, respond to and help people recover from disasters big and small. This includes the wildfires burning across the western U.S. and nearly 70,000 other disasters we handle every year around the country.
- The Red Cross honors donor intent. Any designated funds we raise beyond what are needed for emergency relief will be put to use serving the recovery and disaster preparedness needs of the affected communities.

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FAQ – Western Wildfires Sept. 16, 2015

HOW THE RED CROSS IS HELPING

Q. How is the Red Cross helping people affected by the wildfires in California?

A. The Red Cross is providing shelter, meals, water, relief supplies, health services, emotional comfort and helping people plan their next steps.

The Red Cross is also working with partners to provide care for

evacuated pets and animals.

Q. How long will this disaster response take?

A. The Red Cross will be on the ground helping people for weeks and months to come as they get back on their feet.

HOW TO GET HELP

Q. Where can I go to get help?

A. If you need help, you can go to a Red Cross shelter for a safe place to stay, food, water, basic health and emotional services and more. People in the path of the fires should download the Red Cross Emergency App for real time access to shelter locations, weather alerts, preparedness information and safety tips.

People affected by the Valley, Butte and Rough fires can also (855) 224-2490 to learn about Red Cross services available in their area.

Valley Fire:

The Red Cross is currently operating two shelters:

- Lake County: Kelseyville High School, 5480 Main Street, Kelseyville
- Napa County Fairgrounds, 1435 N. Oak Street, Calistoga. At the fairgrounds, we have partnered with several animal organizations to care for the evacuated pets and animals.
- There are also several shelters operated by Lake County or independently.

Butte Fire:

We've opened a series of shelters on both the Amador and Calaveras sides of the fire.

- In Amador, Jackson Rancheria has graciously hosted shelter and feeding operations.
- In Calaveras:
 - o Good Samaritan Church, 4684 Baldwin St, Valley Springs

- o Jenny Lynn Veterans Hall, 189 Pine Street, Valley Springs

Q. What help is available at the shelters?

A. The shelters are providing for the immediate needs to those affected, including a safe place to stay, food (dinner, snacks), water, medicines and health services, cleaning supplies, emotional support and other support resources. Impacted residents are welcome to stop by during the day even if they choose to spend the night elsewhere. At the fairgrounds, we have partnered with several animal organizations to care for the evacuated pets and animals.

OFFERS TO HELP

Q. How can people help those affected by the wildfires?

A. This has been a major disaster, and the Red Cross will be there for the people in these communities. You can help people affected by disasters like wildfires in California and countless other crises by making a donation to American Red Cross Disaster Relief by visiting www.redcross.org, calling 1-800-RED CROSS or texting the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation. Your donation helps provide food, shelter and emotional support to those affected by disasters.

Q. What if I want my donation to specifically go to the California wildfires?

A. The best way to ensure your donation will go to a specific disaster is to write a check with “California wildfires” in the memo and mail it to your local chapter. The Red Cross honors donor intent. Donations made in support of a specific disaster will be used for that disaster. Any designated funds we use beyond what are needed for emergency relief will be put to use serving the recovery needs of the affected communities.

Q. How can I volunteer and help the wildfire victims?

A. The Red Cross is accepting local community volunteers to assist with disaster response operations in Lake County and Calistoga. **We are looking for volunteers who live within 50**

miles of our two current wildfire response operation sites:

- Kelseyville High School (5480 Main Street in Kelseyville) in Lake County
- Napa County Fairgrounds (1435 N. Oak Street in Calistoga)

Prospective new local volunteers who live within 50 miles of the above locations should complete this application:

<http://tinyurl.com/RedCrossValleyFireVolunteer>. Please email VYSNB@redcross.org with questions or help completing the process.

To make the most efficient use of resources, prospective volunteers who live more than 50 miles from the above locations will be considered if they are able to make a volunteer commitment of 1 to 2 weeks. Please direct them to complete this application <http://tinyurl.com/RedCrossValleyFireVolunteer2>. We will reach out to these individuals if our needs or criteria change. Please email VYSNB@redcross.org with questions or help completing the process.

The Red Cross is always seeking committed, qualified long-term volunteers to help our local communities before, during and after disasters. Please direct anyone who is looking for an ongoing or longer commitment to the Red Cross to this application <http://tinyurl.com/redcrossNCCRvolunteer> and they will work with their local volunteer Manager to complete the steps needed to become a volunteer.

Q. Does the Red Cross accept donations of goods?

A. The Red Cross only accepts large, bulk donations of new items if they are suitable to the needs of a specific disaster. We do not accept small quantities or collections of new or used products, like household goods, clothing or food.

Our disaster teams on the ground are so grateful and humbled by the community's outreach. At this time our shelters have enough supplies to take care of the current shelter residents.

The best way to help evacuees at this point is through a financial donation.

Q. Why won't the Red Cross take small quantities of donated goods?

A. After a disaster, financial donations are the quickest and best way to get help to the people who need it most. The Red Cross isn't equipped to handle a large influx of donations like household items, clothing or food that may or may not be useful to victims. It takes time and money to sort, process, transport and then distribute donated items—whereas financial donations can be accessed quickly and put to use right away. Plus, financial donations allow us to be flexible in the help that we provide and ensure we can provide what people need most. As an added benefit, financial donations allow the Red Cross and disaster victims to purchase items locally, stimulating the economy of the disaster-affected area.

Even a small financial donation can go further than you might think. For instance, \$2 can provide a snack to a child who just lost his or her home, and \$10 can provide a hot meal to that same child. You can help people affected by disasters like wildfires in California and countless other crises by making a donation to support American Red Cross Disaster Relief. Your gift enables the Red Cross to prepare for and provide shelter, food, emotional support and other assistance in response to disasters. Visit redcross.org, call 1-800-RED CROSS or text the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation.

Q. Where can I make a non-cash donation?

A. If you'd like to donate food items, the Red Cross recommends contacting your local food bank. To donate clothing or household items, we suggest visiting www.nvoad.org for a list of organizations that accept these types of donations. Or contact organizations in your local community, like the Salvation Army or Goodwill Industries, to see if they are accepting non-cash

donations.

Alternatively, consider selling your items on [eBay Giving Works](#), or another site, and donate the proceeds to an established disaster relief organization, such as the Red Cross, serving the affected area.

FUNDRAISING

Q. Will donations to Red Cross Disaster Relief go to help people affected by the wildfires?

A. Donations to Red Cross Disaster Relief are used to help people affected by disasters large and small, like wildfires in California and countless other crises. We respond to 70,000 disasters across the country every year and donations to Red Cross Disaster Relief are used to prepare for, respond to and help people recover from these disasters.

Q. The Red Cross talks about honoring donor intent. How will you honor my intent for my donation to help people affected by these wildfires?

A. We honor donor intent, and people who want to donate to a specific disaster such as the California wildfires can write that designation into the memo line of their check -- and the money will be used for our efforts there. We also recommend completing and mailing the donation form on redcross.org with your check.

People who make a donation online have the choice of Disaster Relief, Where It's Needed Most or their Local Chapter. We make it clear online that those donations to Disaster Relief are going for wildfires, floods and other disasters because we are responding to multiple disasters around the country every day - and those people need our help too.

It's important to know that when disasters strike, Disaster Relief money is used immediately to open shelters and provide food,

relief items and health and mental health support.

Q. How can I donate online to help people affected by the wildfires?

A. People who donate online at redcross.org can donate to Disaster Relief, to Where It's Needed Most, or to their Local Chapter. Donations to American Red Cross Disaster Relief help people affected by disasters like wildfires, floods and other crises, providing food, shelter and emotional support. If you want to donate specifically to the wildfire response, you can send a check and note that in memo line.

Q. How can people help those affected by these devastating wildfires?

A. This has been a major disaster, and the Red Cross will be there for the people in these communities. You can help people affected by disasters like the wildfires in California and countless other crises by making a donation to American Red Cross Disaster Relief by visiting www.redcross.org, calling 1-800-RED CROSS or texting the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation. Your donation helps provide food, shelter and emotional support to those affected by disasters.

COSTS/FUNDS RAISED

Q. What is the cost of this disaster and how much money has been donated?

A. Like all disasters, the situation is evolving and it will take some time to determine an exact cost. We won't be able to give a cost estimate until we have a clearer picture of how long we will be providing help to the victims and how many supplies and workers we'll need to provide that support.

HOW DONATIONS ARE USED

Q. What services does Red Cross Disaster Relief cover?

A. Disaster victims need the essentials right away, such as food, water, shelter, first aid and emotional support – those are just some of the things that a donation to Red Cross Disaster Relief buys. But it costs more than what you might think to run a disaster operation. There are a lot of behind-the-scenes costs such as warehouses, vehicle maintenance, volunteer training, travel costs and IT expenses. All of those items ensure we can get help to disaster victims as quickly as possible and the donations to support Disaster Relief pay for those, too.

Q. Does my donation really help? What will it be used for?

A. The donations we receive for Red Cross Disaster Relief are put to good use. Any donation, large or small, will help. For example, \$2.50 can provide a comfort kit containing personal hygiene items for someone in a disaster; \$5 can cover the cost of a blanket; and \$10 the cost of a hot meal. A \$50 donation can cover the cost of food and shelter for a day, including three meals, blankets, comfort kits and the Red Cross expense of mobilizing them to the disaster area. For \$200, someone's donation can cover the cost of providing food and shelter to a family of four for a day they spend in a shelter.

Q. How much of my donation goes to helping disaster victims and how much goes to overhead?

A. An average of 91 cents of every dollar the Red Cross spends is invested in humanitarian services and programs like providing disaster relief. Donations are used to provide food, shelter, emotional support and other assistance, as well as the vehicles, warehouses and people that make that relief possible. We only use a small slice of every dollar to support general operations to keep the Red Cross running, such as information technology, fundraising, finance, HR and communications.

In this area the Red Cross compares favorably with other nonprofits, is accredited by the Better Business Bureau (BBB) and has a 3-star rating with Charity Navigator. One of the BBB's standards for accountability is that a charity should spend at

least 65 percent of total expenses on program activities. The Red Cross vastly outperforms on this measure. We encourage donors to review our rankings with watchdog organizations and view our audited financial reports on [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org).

SERVICES

Q. How do I find a Red Cross shelter if a wildfire threatens my home?

A. If you need the location of a shelter, you should go to [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org) and check the shelter map, or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). You can also download the Red Cross emergency app for smart phones to find shelters in your area. Users can find it in smartphone app stores by searching for the American Red Cross or going to [redcross.org/apps](https://www.redcross.org/apps).

Q. What do I need to bring to the shelter?

A. The Red Cross encourages those who plan to stay in a Red Cross shelter to bring the following items for each member of their family: prescription and emergency medication; extra clothing; pillows and blankets; and hygiene supplies. Additionally, special items for children and infants, such as diapers, formulas and toys, should be brought, along with other items for family members who are elderly or disabled.

Q. How do I find a friend or loved one in that area?

A. If you have access to a computer, you can go to [redcross.org/safeandwell](https://www.redcross.org/safeandwell) to search for loved ones who may have listed themselves on the site. It may be difficult to get through to cell phones, so try texting people in the area instead. You can also use the “Family Safe” function of the Red Cross Emergency app to instantly contact loved ones. Users can find it in smartphone app stores by searching for the American Red Cross or going to [redcross.org/apps](https://www.redcross.org/apps).

All Red Cross mobile apps feature an “I’m Safe” button that

allows users to post a message to their social accounts, letting friends and family know they are out of harm's way.

Q. What if I can't find a family member listed on the site?

A. There are many reasons your loved one might not be listed on the site. We recommend that you regularly search the site. If your loved one has not yet registered, he or she may do so upon arriving at a shelter. Please note that some people may choose not to register.

In addition to searching this website, you might try to call your loved one during off-peak hours or send a text message. Consider calling people who may know where the person is, such as neighbors, employers and co-workers. Also, if the person likes to use the Internet, consider sending an email or checking social networks (i.e., Facebook, Twitter). If your loved one has a serious, pre-existing health or mental health condition, please call your local American Red Cross Chapter or 1-800 RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Q. How should I prepare in case my family needs to evacuate?

A. Wildfires spread quickly, igniting brush, trees and homes. The Red Cross urges residents to follow all evacuation orders from local enforcement and be prepared. All families should have an emergency game plan for disasters large and small. Some basic wildfire safety tips are:

- Be ready to leave at a moment's notice.
- Listen to local radio and television stations for updated emergency information.
- Back cars into driveways or park in open spaces facing the direction of escape.
- Confine pets to one room so that you can find them if you need to evacuate quickly.

[Click here](#) for additional safety information, including what do to

before, during and after a wildfire.

OTHER ISSUES AND HOT TOPICS

Q. Why are people camping outside the Red Cross shelter?

A. The Red Cross shelter in Calistoga provides a welcoming, safe place for evacuees. Many local residents have chosen to set up individual camp sites outside the shelter so they can access the food, comfort, information and services available at the shelter while enjoying the comfort of their personal tent or RV. All of these evacuees are welcome and invited into the shelter, whether for an overnight stay, a hot meal, hygiene, help refilling medications or emotional comfort. Also, the Red Cross is providing additional hygiene facilities outside the shelter for the people who have chosen to camp, and has ordered tarps to support the comfort of people who choose to remain outdoors during inclement weather.

Q. How is the Red Cross helping people who had to evacuate with their pets?

A. The Red Cross is working with partners to provide care for evacuated pets and animals.

- Butte Fire: Pet evacuation shelters are being coordinated by both Amador and Calaveras departments of social services.
- Valley Fire: At the fairgrounds in Calistoga, we have partnered with several animal organizations to care for the evacuated pets and animals.

Q. Will the Red Cross shelter family pets during a disaster?

A. The Red Cross will work with other agencies in the community to make sure shelter residents have resources for their pets. Often, that means animals must be housed in a separate area from their owners. Red Cross shelters must accommodate a wide range of people. Along with infants,

children and the elderly, we may also have people with pet allergies, asthma, or other health issues, and people with a fear of animals. For the well-being of all people who turn to the Red Cross for help after a disaster, there often needs to be physical space between animals and people.

Service animals for people with disabilities are an exception. Service animals are not considered pets and they may stay with their owner in Red Cross shelters. Shelter workers will do all they can to accommodate service animals comfortably.

Q. What is the Red Cross doing to meet the needs of children, the elderly and people with disabilities?

A. The Red Cross provides services to people with a wide range of needs during a disaster, and our shelter workers try to ensure that everyone who comes to the Red Cross gets the best possible help.

Red Cross health services and mental health workers are present in shelters to tend to the good health and well-being of all residents. These workers assess health needs, provide or assist with care as needed, and replace medications, supplies and equipment that may have been lost or destroyed during the disaster. Health services workers encourage residents to wash their hands, cover their coughs and dispose of tissues properly to prevent infection. They also are available to assist people with care for common ailments and injuries. Red Cross mental health workers help to promote resiliency and good coping skills.

In addition, The Red Cross and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have developed a shelter resident intake form that helps workers have confidential conversations with individuals and families about additional support, supplies or information they may need during a stay in our shelter. The form asks questions about the immediate needs of the person and how much assistance a person needs. Red Cross workers then interview each person or family in the shelter to learn what kind

of care might be needed in the coming days and weeks.

Q. Does the Red Cross admit people with disabilities into shelters?

A. Absolutely. In fact, we will do everything possible to ensure that individuals with disabilities or people with access and functional needs feel comfortable in our shelters. The Red Cross works with community partners, including government and non-governmental agencies, to help people after disasters.

Q. What kinds of services can the Red Cross offer to people with disabilities in shelters?

A. The Red Cross strives to make all Red Cross shelter services available to everyone who needs them, whether or not they have a disability. When a person with a disability or access and functional needs comes to a Red Cross shelter, a worker will have a confidential conversation with them about their specific needs and how we can address them.

The Red Cross routinely provides support such as helping a person move from a wheelchair to a cot, cutting food, or navigating a cafeteria-style food service line. In many shelters, we can provide items such as shower stools, commode chairs and larger-sized cots that make shelters safer and more comfortable for people. The Red Cross works with local community partners to identify services that might be needed in shelters and tap into those resources when necessary. And because stress can affect anyone, the Red Cross also has disaster mental health workers available to help people cope.

Q. Why does the Red Cross require me to register and fill out paperwork in order to volunteer?

A. The safety of the people we serve and the volunteers who help them is of utmost importance to the Red Cross. We have procedures in place to track who is volunteering for the Red Cross to help keep people safe. This includes running a background check on all volunteers who will work directly with the people who turn to us for help or have access to funds.

Volunteers also sign an agreement to abide by our code of ethics and conduct.

