

Prepare Greater St. Louis Initiative EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Prepare Greater St. Louis” was launched via press conference from Red Cross headquarters in St. Louis on September 1, 2004—the first day of the first National Preparedness Month. Joined by emergency response, business and community partners, the Chapter announced an aggressive five-year plan to better prepare the Greater St. Louis community for emergencies and disasters. Less than four years following the public launch, Prepare Greater St. Louis is proving to be a successful model. In May, 2008, the Chapter held a second press conference to celebrate key milestones and rally support for continued efforts to prepare Greater St. Louis.

THE INITIATIVE:

“Prepare Greater St. Louis” is an American Red Cross initiative designed to best prepare the Greater St. Louis community to manage disasters and emergencies, from tornadoes and earthquakes to bioterrorism and pandemic influenza. Through this aggressive initiative, Red Cross joins with national, state and local emergency response partners, businesses, organizations, schools and individuals to prepare Greater St. Louis along two tracks:

TRACK 1—Personal Preparedness: The Red Cross is multiplying its local efforts to help people understand and embrace personal preparedness, with education and also with new, easier ways to prepare.

TRACK 2—Red Cross Readiness: The St. Louis Area Chapter announced a community-wide, aggressive plan to increase local disaster response readiness to Level III—the highest level of readiness that a chapter can achieve on its own. Level III Readiness will place Greater St. Louis among the best prepared communities in America.

Why Two Tracks?

Personal preparedness is the cornerstone of emergency response—you need to know how to take care of yourself, and your family, when tragedy strikes. Red Cross will help as quickly as possible, but Red Cross will only be able to help take care of you if it is ready *before* a disaster strikes, responding swiftly and efficiently with resources and tools already in hand.



THE NEED:

Studies conducted by the American Red Cross, WorthlinWorldwide and Fleishman-Hillard show that Americans feel they are largely unprepared for emergencies and disasters:

- Only 3 in 10 feel very prepared for a catastrophic event.
- Nearly everyone—96 percent—say that it is important for all people to personally take steps to prepare for a catastrophic disaster.
- 82 percent say they would get prepared if only they knew how.
- When asked to imagine that they are confined to their homes in a catastrophic disaster, with no utilities and only the food and water already on hand, most people say that they expect the Red Cross to be there for them.

In 2006, FOCUS St. Louis formed the Regional Preparedness Task Force and spent more than a year examining the issues of preparedness. In September 2007, the Task Force issued a comprehensive report outlining the level of risk for natural disasters, pandemics, chemical attacks and more, examining economic impact and loss of life. The result is a call-to-action for the entire community outlining three main elements that must be addressed: 1) communication; 2) individual preparedness; and 3) advance organizations preparation. Red Cross sits on the Regional Preparedness Task Force and partners with FOCUS St. Louis, Emergency Management, and other agencies to support regional preparedness.

In 2007, the 9/11 Commission Act became federal law, tasking the Department of Homeland Security to develop a preparedness accreditation process to encourage and aid the private sector in their efforts to prepare for disasters and emergencies. Red Cross is working in cooperation with Homeland Security to support this effort.

MILESTONES 2008

TRACK ONE: PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS

EXCEEDING GOALS

Expand Disaster Education Outreach: In 2004, Red Cross said it would double its annual disaster education outreach from 40,000 people educated per year to 95,000 in 2009. We're pleased to report that by the end of June 2008, Red Cross disaster education will have reached over 92,000 people.

Develop More Efficient Safety Training: In 2004, Red Cross said it would make learning CPR and First Aid easier by launching on-line courses and by reducing classroom time. Red Cross now offers four First Aid, CPR and Automated External Defibrillator safety certification courses on-line, reducing classroom time from 4-6 hours to 1-2 hours. On-line class registration is now available for all classes; thousands register on-line each year. In 2004, Red Cross trained 170,000 in health and safety courses; now the St. Louis Area Chapter trains over 190,000. In 2007, Red Cross launched a new “practice while you watch” First Aid and CPR course complete with a workbook, DVD and practice tools for individuals to train themselves.

Produce Ready-made Emergency Supply Kits: While Red Cross always teaches people how to build their own emergency supply kit, studies show that 60 percent of those who did not have a kit would purchase one if it were available for sale already assembled. Ready-made emergency supply kits are now available through the Red Cross with prices ranging from \$20-70. Thousands are sold every year.

Create a Public Education Campaign: In 2004, Red Cross said it would tackle personal preparedness in a new way. The new Red Cross Ready Rating™ Program was launched in February 2008, after two years in development; this new first-of-its-kind, web-based emergency preparedness program guides businesses, organizations and schools through the preparation process, and recognizes them for their efforts through its unique membership model which makes preparedness both measurable and visible. Ultimately the Ready Rating Program reaches individuals, helping them to prepare thanks to the educational efforts of the Ready Rating businesses, organizations and schools. The Ready Rating Program is wildly successful and has been adopted by the American National Red Cross to roll-out nationally by 2010.

Red Cross Ready Rating™ Program



TRACK TWO: RED CROSS READINESS

LEADING THE NATION

Achieve the Highest Level of Readiness: In 2004, the St. Louis Area Chapter said that it would rally the community for volunteers, partnerships, funding and resources to significantly expand its disaster response capabilities, becoming one of the best prepared Chapters in the nation. In May, 2008, the American National Red Cross announced that the St. Louis Area Chapter achieved High Level III Readiness, the highest level of readiness that a Chapter can achieve on its own; more than this would require the resources of the nation. *The St. Louis Area Chapter is the first Red Cross Chapter in the country to achieve this high level of disaster readiness.*

In 2004, the St. Louis Area Chapter was classified to respond to Level II disasters; in less than four years, readiness has changed significantly:

- Highly-trained, local disaster volunteers grew from 89 at Level II to 382 at Level III.
- Instead of capping its ability at 75 families, the St. Louis Area Chapter is able to immediately serve 600 families following a disaster.
- Instead of having the capacity to manage 50 cases, local disaster caseworkers can handle 300 emergency cases.
- Instead of serving 1,000 meals a day, disaster workers are now able to serve 4,000.
- As for cost, instead of managing \$50,000 in relief efforts, the Chapter is able to handle disaster relief operations up to \$250,000.

Fund the Prepare Greater St. Louis Initiative: Generous community partners stepped up to fund the Prepare Greater St. Louis initiative, helping the Chapter to enhance preparedness efforts to sustain its level of readiness. With gratitude, the Chapter announced the following gifts:

- Edward Jones generously donated \$300,000 to fund the Prepare Greater St. Louis initiative through 2010.
- The Taylor Family donated \$250,000 to the American Red Cross St. Louis Area Chapter to sustain Prepare Greater St. Louis.
- Enterprise Rent-a-Car Foundation donated an additional \$250,000 for the Initiative.
- Anheuser-Busch became the Founding Sponsor of the Red Cross Ready Rating Program, giving \$250,000 to create and launch the program.
- The United Way of Greater St. Louis continues its substantial support of Red Cross disaster and emergency services programs and has been the single greatest contributor in the Chapter's ability to achieve High Level III Readiness.

“In the event of a disaster, regardless of its size, it will be up to the individual to be trained and prepared... the public mindset of ‘waiting for help’ must be replaced with an ability to self-sustain for up to three days.”

—FOCUS St. Louis Regional Preparedness Task Force



PREPARE GREATER ST. LOUIS INITIATIVE

Executive Summary: Report to the Community May 2008



10195 Corporate Square
St. Louis, MO 63132
Phone (314) 516-2800
Fax (314) 516-2821

www.redcrossstl.org

Lead Sponsors:



United Way Member Agency