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Red Cross Workers Serve Survivors of Thursday's Southern Storms

Operations spread among 29 counties in two states

Editorial note: You can get up-to-the-minute updates on the relief operations in Alabama at www.redcrossal.wordpress.com – and in Georgia at www.redcrossga.wordpress.com – and feel free to push the information to the public on your schedule. For national media, the best contact is the Disaster Operations Center, available 24 hours a day at 202-303-5551.

BIRMINGHAM, AL., March 2, 2007 – The American Red Cross has opened up two disaster relief operations in response to Thursday's severe weather outbreak in Alabama and Georgia. Twelve counties in Alabama were affected by the storms. Coffee County was the hardest hit with 90% of the damage. Preliminary reports show that 250 houses were either destroyed or suffered Major damage and 500 houses suffered minor damage. In Georgia the storms affected 19 counties with the Americus and Albany suffering the most damage. There are preliminary reports that 250 homes were either destroyed or suffered major damage and 450 homes received minor damages.

In Alabama, three shelters housed a total population of 65 overnight. The Blood Region in Birmingham shipped blood products to hospitals in the affected areas and is prepared to assist in other ways. The Coffee County Chapter is providing meals and snacks to the impacted area around Enterprise, with the help of six mobile feeding vans from across the Southeast. So far, the Red Cross has served approximately 1500 meals in the area. Emergency Communication Vehicles with satellite phone technology have also been sent to the Enterprise area to assist in the recovery and disaster assessment.

In Georgia, Red Cross Chapters in affected areas opened three chapters last night and more are expected to open today to accommodate residents as needed. Those shelters are expected to serve a population of between 50 and 60 people. The Central Georgia chapter will take its shelter trailer to Americus to assist in recovery efforts. Eleven feeding vans are deployed to the area with more potentially headed that way as needed. The Middle Flint Chapter in Americus fed more than 1,000 people just for lunch alone on Friday.

Additional volunteers will be dispatched soon, to begin the task of individual family casework as needed.

American Red Cross has yet to estimate how much Thursday's storms will cost the organization. Every Red Cross dollar used is a donated dollar. Anyone who would like to give to the National Disaster Relief Fund should call 800-RED-CROSS or contact your local chapter.

All American Red Cross disaster assistance is free, made possible by voluntary donations of time and money from the American people. You can help the victims of these tornadoes and thousands of disasters across the country each year by making a financial gift to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund, which enables the Red Cross to provide shelter, food, counseling and other assistance to victims of disaster. The American Red Cross honors donor intent. If you wish to designate your donation to a specific disaster, please do so at the time of your donation. Call 1-800-REDCROSS or 1-800-257-7575 (Spanish). Contributions to the Disaster Relief Fund may be sent to your local American Red Cross chapter or to the American Red Cross, P. O. Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013. Internet users can make a secure online contribution by visiting www.redcross.org.

