



**American
Red Cross**

Cape Cod and Islands Chapter

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Media Alert **MEDIA ALERT**

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For Immediate Release

Cape and Islands United Way to Challenge Martha's Vineyard Community to Support Red Cross Preparedness Initiative

Hyannis, MA, March 3rd, 2010 – The Cape and Islands United Way has supported the American Red Cross, Cape Cod and Islands Chapter with a \$4,000 Challenge grant to support the Red Cross Martha's Vineyard Preparedness Initiative, aimed at benefiting every resident on the Island.

Greg Orcutt of Vineyard Haven, Cape and Islands United Way board member says: "*We are pleased to issue this challenge and ask Martha's Vineyard to join us in supporting this Preparedness Initiative so that our Island residents can be ready for disaster.*"

The plan is estimated to cost \$58,000 and consists of pre-positioning the equipment and recruit, train and equip the volunteer team necessary to be prepared and respond to an emergency when the need arises on Martha's Vineyard.

- Pre-position the materials and equipment to support shelter and mass care for 1,000.
- Incorporate current communications and data equipment to support a major shelter operation.
- Modernize the emergency support vehicle to support response requirements
- Expand volunteer recruitment and training initiatives enabling each member of the Martha's Vineyard community to be part of the preparedness solution with specific focus on the youth and diverse members of Martha's Vineyard.
- Demonstrate that the Red Cross is committed to partner with other organizations and residents within the Martha's Vineyard community through Memoranda of Understanding
 - With other response agencies such as the Medical Reserve Corps and a through a close working relationship with Emergency Managers on the Island.
 - Provide improved access training systems through targeted outreach programs increasing the number of residents trained in critical life saving skills training.
- Demonstrate donor support will be directed to continuously improve the quality of Red Cross service delivery, community preparedness, education and disaster response on Martha's Vineyard.

The ultimate success of the initiative will be measured by having Red Cross volunteers trained, equipped and ready to operate disaster response shelters and the community to be prepared to respond to local emergencies if the need arises.

In the past two years, the Cape Cod and Islands Chapter has actively worked to build its disaster volunteer team on the Island. The chapter is finalizing the training 12 new disaster volunteers and already has 10 trained volunteers in place on the island, led by Zone Leader Jim Thomas from Oak Bluffs.

To donate or for more information about the Martha's Vineyard Preparedness Initiative or about the various training programs, both online and in person, please contact the American Red Cross, Cape Cod and Islands Chapter, American Red Cross, 286 South Street, Hyannis, MA 02601 or via www.cciredcross.org or toll-free at (508) 775-1540.

NOTE: All disaster relief support provided by the American Red Cross is free of charge. The Chapter does not receive government funding. It is totally dependent upon local support from foundations, individuals and businesses. Your gift supports the lifesaving mission of the American Red Cross in your community, across the country and around the world.