

Special Alert for the Media

The American Red Cross Publishes Cape Cod and Islands Media Guide in Preparation of Hurricane Season

Using Technology to Help People Prepare for Hurricane Season

May 28th, 2011, Hyannis, MA – As hurricane season is officially starting on June 1st, 2011, the American Red Cross, Cape Cod and Islands Chapter has published an updated Media Guide for Hurricanes and Local Emergencies. This guide has been put together in collaboration with and input from the Cape Cod Disaster Animal Response Team and the Barnstable County Incident Management Team as part of the Regional Sheltering Plan.

With new predictions for an above-average 2011 Atlantic hurricane season, the American Red Cross is adding technology to the many ways it helps people to get prepared. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicts that 12-18 named storms, 6-10 hurricanes and 3-6 major hurricanes will occur this year. The 2011 Atlantic hurricane season starts June 1, and families can take steps now to create a family emergency plan.

To make that planning easier, the Red Cross has developed a free iPhone app that gives the location of all open Red Cross shelters. The app not only maps the location of a shelter, but also shows current capacity and population. To download the app, users can visit the Apple store and search “American Red Cross shelters.” For those without an iPhone, the same shelter information also appears on the Red Cross website and can be accessed by visiting www.redcross.org and clicking on “Find a Shelter.” Both are refreshed with updated information every 30 minutes.

In addition, the Red Cross [Safe and Well website](#) now allows users to update their Facebook and Twitter status when they register on the site. Safe and Well is a secure way to let your loved ones know where you are going during a hurricane evacuation or that you are “okay” in the aftermath of a disaster. If users choose to do so, they can easily let their entire network of friends and family know they are safe in one step.

“This is an ideal time to get a disaster supply kit ready, make an evacuation plan with your family, and get information on what to do during a hurricane,” said Ed Robertson, Cape Cod and Islands Red Cross Disaster Services. “It’s also the right time to learn how to locate a shelter or use Safe and Well, and new technology is making it even easier to do that.”

The Cape Cod and Islands Chapter, American Red Cross has special Be Red Cross Ready information booklets available in English and Portuguese free of charge upon request by calling (508) 775-1540 ext. 23 or by emailing info@cciredcross.org

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies nearly half of the nation's blood; teaches lifesaving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission.

For more information about disaster preparedness, about training, volunteering or to make a donation, please contact the American Red Cross, Cape Cod and Islands Chapter at 286 South Street, Hyannis, MA 02601.

Internet users can make a secure online contribution at cciredcross.org or call (508) 775-1540.