American Red Cross

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American Red Cross Bay Area Unveils Unprecedented, Three-Year Disaster Preparedness Campaign

"Prepare Bay Area" to Reach One Million People

SAN FRANCISCO, April 13, 2006 – Today, the American Red Cross Bay Area introduced "Prepare Bay Area" (PBA), the most comprehensive preparedness campaign ever launched in the Bay Area. Additionally, the Red Cross presented summary data from its new Bay Area preparedness survey, that revealed only 6% of Bay Area residents had made a disaster plan, built a kit and gotten trained. Also, the Red Cross released a white paper: "What if the Big One Hit Today? – American Red Cross Bay Area Chapter Disaster Response Plan."

With initial funding from Pacific Gas and Electric Company, PBA is an unprecedented operational campaign designed to get one million Bay Area residents committed to and demonstrating preparedness for any emergency. To achieve this goal, PBA is partnering with businesses, faith communities, government agencies, non-profits, schools, civic groups and ethnic communities to deliver detailed "how to" information and training everywhere Bay Area people work, live and worship.

The campaign specifically focuses upon vulnerable communities, most at risk in a disaster. The Red Cross is enlisting non-profit organizations to reach these communities consisting of the elderly, children, persons with disabilities, the homeless, people for whom English is a second language and low-income communities.

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The American Red Cross Bay Area proudly serves Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Solano counties.

The Red Cross also revealed PBA work in progress as follows:

- The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce has committed to delivering the PBA preparedness program to its 2,000 member companies and their employees.
- Contra Costa County has committed to personal preparedness training for 8,000 county employees.
- The Philippines Consulate is developing a comprehensive disaster preparedness program for their more than 500,000 Bay Area residents, principally located in Solano, San Mateo and Alameda counties.

PBA provides online and offline guidance to help individuals create a disaster plan, make emergency kits and complete community preparedness or first aid/CPR training. This comprehensive "how to" system, partnered with the involvement of leading non-profit organizations and local community leaders will extend the message and maximize program delivery to all residents of San Francisco, San Mateo, Marin, Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano counties.

To affirm their commitment to **Make a Plan, Build a Kit, and Get Trained**, Bay Area residents have a choice of three options: www.preparebayarea.org, our companion on-line community, and 1-877-PREPBAY. Thousands of free thirty-minute, specialized trainings at schools and workplaces will help students and workers learn to create their own home preparedness. Paid, certified first-aid and CPR trainings are also available as requested. Materials will be available in multiple languages.

Mayors Gavin Newsom of San Francisco and Jerry Brown of Oakland promise their support of Prepare Bay Area. "The hundredth anniversary of the Great Quake of 1906 is a powerful reminder of the Bay Area's vulnerability in a major seismic event," said Mayor Jerry Brown. "The efforts behind Prepare Bay Area represent a step toward achieving citizen preparedness on a large scale. The more our businesses and citizens prepare today, the more lives we can save at the critical hour."

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"This is a regional effort, which is critical to the success of any preparedness campaign," said Mayor Newsom. "We cannot let what happened to New Orleans happen here in the Bay Area. With all Bay Area communities working together, we can lessen the potential for suffering and loss."

"Prepare Bay Area will take its preparedness program out to schools, businesses, congregations, communities and agencies where their leaders or "influencers" will compel students, employees, congregants and members to actually get prepared," stated Harris Bostic II, PBA director. "Through these types of partnerships is the way that we can make the Bay Area better prepared for any disaster."

PBA specifics were announced at a press conference during "Together We Prepare for Businesses," a conference to train Bay Area businesses for the event of a disaster.

About the American Red Cross Bay Area Chapter
Governed by volunteers and supported by community donations, your American Red Cross Bay Area helps residents in six counties prepare for disasters, recover from them and connect U.S. military families and those torn by war and disasters. With the help of 3,000 volunteers dedicated to saving lives, the Red Cross annually mobilizes relief to families affected by more than 500 disasters, trains more than 80,000 people in life-saving and preparedness skills and exchanges hundreds of emergency messages for military, war and disaster-stricken families. Call 1-888-4-HELP-BAY or visit www.redcrossbayarea.org to learn more. The Red Cross provides nearly half the Bay Area's blood supply. Call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1-800-448-3543) today to schedule your lifesaving donation.

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