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Media Alert
MEDIA ALERT

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American Red Cross Encourages Use of Safe and Well Website to Keep Families Connected

SPOKANE WA, July 10th, 2008 – With wildfires sweeping through streets and neighborhoods, many homeowners had to evacuate quickly and suddenly realized they needed to contact loved ones and let them know they were safe. The Safe and Well Website is an effective tool to allow families to learn the status of their loved ones. The Inland Northwest Chapter of the American Red Cross is now recommending that individuals and families log on to www.redcross.org to find loved ones and register themselves. With three shelters open, the Red Cross wants you to stay connected.

Can I find out where someone is located by using this site?

No. When delivering disaster relief services, the American Red Cross is guided by strict privacy and confidentiality policies. These guidelines limit the kinds of personal and location information collected by the Red Cross that can be made available to the public. The American Red Cross *Safe and Well Website* provides a way for individuals affected by a disaster to list *themselves* as "safe and well".

Can I register that I am looking for a loved one?

No. The *Safe and Well Website* facilitates communication from *inside* the disaster affected areas to family members *outside* the disaster areas. Using their phone number or complete home address, you can search the list of those who have self-registered and view any "safe and well" messages that may have been left by your loved ones.

I don't know my friend's phone number or address. Can I still search for him?

No. You must enter either a pre-disaster phone number (home, work or cell) or a complete home address in order to search for the "safe and well" messages left by your family or friends.

How can I be sure that the results of my search are for my loved ones?

Because your search was initiated using a specific phone number or home address information, you can know that the record returned matches the information you entered.

- There are currently 136 individuals and families affected by the disaster currently at the University High School Shelter.

For security purposes, members of the media requesting a visit to the shelters must contact Margaret Price, Public Affairs Coordinator, to arrange an interview at (509) 509-981-3184.

Governed by volunteers and supported by community donations, the American Red Cross is a nationwide network of nearly 1,000 chapters and Blood Services regions dedicated to saving lives and helping people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. Led by 1.2 million volunteers and 30,000 employees, the Red Cross annually mobilizes relief to families affected by more than 67,000 disasters, trains almost 12 million people in lifesaving skills and exchanges more than a million emergency messages for U.S. military service personnel and their families. The Red Cross is the largest supplier of blood and blood products to more than 3,000 hospitals across the nation and also assists victims of international disasters and conflicts at locations worldwide.

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