



**American
Red Cross**

Cape Cod and Islands Chapter

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Media ALERT

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Red Cross receives \$1,000 from the Cape Cod Foundation for its Disability Preparedness Initiative

Hyannis, Mass., May 22, 2008 – The Cape Cod and Islands Chapter of the American Red Cross has received a \$1,000 grant from the Cape Cod Foundation for its Disability Preparedness Initiative. The grant was provided from the Jean B. Edgerly Memorial Fund as one of 23 grants awarded in the spring grant cycle.

Currently, thanks to collaboration between the American Red Cross and FEMA, the chapter has educational pamphlets specifically developed to support those residents of Cape Cod and the Islands who are hard of hearing or visually impaired. Unfortunately, these are not available in Braille or as an audio version for the hearing impaired.

The purpose of the Disability Preparedness Initiative is to change that and address the threats to members of our community with disabilities in the case of a disaster and provide education and solutions.

Individuals with hearing or vision difficulties are especially at risk during a disaster because of their decreased ability to sense an emergency and to react adequately. Many home fire fatalities occur when people are sleeping and for those hard-of-hearing, standard smoke alarms with strobe lights have proven to be inefficient. The visually-impaired are able to hear smoke alarms, but home escape plans can become difficult and dangerous, especially during periods of stress when the home may be smoke-filled.

Implementation of this program will allow the Red Cross to meet numerous goals and objectives including working with the National Braille Press to transcribe and publish pamphlets in Braille, working with the Audible Local Ledger, Inc. to provide a radio presentation and organizing a multi-media education presentation with emergency preparedness information given in both text and auditory forms to be provided to disability advocate organizations and distributed to news stations. The Disability Preparedness Initiative is another important step in one of the chapter's main goals of having at least one person in every household trained and prepared for any disaster.

For more information about disaster preparedness, training, or to support the American Red Cross Cape Cod Islands Chapter, write to 286 South Street, Hyannis, MA 02601, call (508) 775-1540 or visit www.capecodandislandsredcross.org

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