



## Ongoing Red Cross Mission Supports Oklahomans' Recovery

In May 2013, a series of devastating tornadoes brought heartbreaking destruction to communities across central Oklahoma. In the two years since the tornadoes struck, the Red Cross in Oklahoma has worked alongside our local partners to provide ongoing support, while case managers have assisted nearly 12,000 people with urgent recovery needs, including housing expenses, furniture and appliances, transportation, health services and emotional support.

Today, in addition to guiding people through recovery, we are also helping them become more resilient and better prepared. From disaster education for kids to residential shelter programs and weather radios that will protect families from future tornado strikes, compassionate contributions to the Red Cross have supported an enduring investment in the safety of the affected communities.

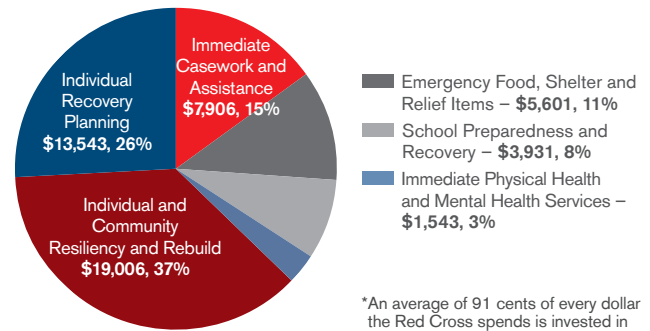
This vital work is made possible by our donors, volunteers and partnerships with other nonprofit and community groups. As of May 1, 2015, the Red Cross has spent or made commitments to spend approximately \$51.5 million for our Oklahoma emergency relief and recovery efforts. This is 98 percent of our \$52.4 million in total donations for the 2013 Oklahoma tornadoes.



Jim Miller, of Carney, Okla., learns how to use the contents of his new disaster preparedness kit from Red Cross resiliency specialist Taylor Smith. Red Cross workers are distributing up to 6,000 preparedness kits, including weather radios, to people living in high-risk storm paths.

### Oklahoma Tornadoes Expenses and Commitments\*

Through May 1, 2015 – \$51.5M (of \$52.4M raised)  
(in thousands)



\*An average of 91 cents of every dollar the Red Cross spends is invested in humanitarian services and programs.

## Residential Shelters Provide an Added Layer of Safety

Residents across Oklahoma know first-hand how tornadoes can affect a community. Over the last year, the Red Cross has continued working with our government and community partners to invest in storm shelters that will provide families with safer refuge when dangerous storms threaten their homes.

The number of storm shelters in Moore has tripled since the 2013 tornadoes, with an estimated one-third of homes in the town now having this crucial safety feature. And many of those new shelters were made possible by generous donations to the Red Cross.

As of April 27, 2015, the Red Cross has helped fund the construction of 2,656 shelters, including a \$3.75 million grant to build residential shelters in Moore. To date, 1,504 shelters have already been installed in new or rebuilt homes around Moore.

An additional \$6.75 million grant is supporting the installation of storm shelters in other affected cities and counties throughout the region. For example, as part of a broader disaster preparedness partnership with Oklahoma's Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, the Red Cross will help provide residential shelters to 92 tribal homeowners in hard-hit Canadian and Oklahoma Counties.

Retirees Louis and Cindy Henderson, of Moore, had moved into what they thought would be their last home just 19 months before the May 2013 tornado. When the tornado hit, they did not have a storm shelter, and rode out the storm in a neighbor’s underground shelter.

“You could just hear it grinding and tearing the whole house apart, and we didn’t know if we were going to make it or not, even underground,” said Louis. After the tornado passed, Louis and Cindy emerged to find nothing but rubble where their home once stood.

Thanks to a Red Cross grant in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, the Hendersons were able to include a storm shelter in their reconstructed home. “This new storm shelter means everything to us,” Louis said. “I used to be the last one to go to the shelter, but now I’m the first one to get in there after that experience.”

## Preparedness Outreach Empowers Children and Families

Following the 2013 tornadoes, Red Cross workers and volunteers brought the Pillowcase Project—a preparedness education program for children in grades 3 through 5—to elementary schools around the affected region. When the area was struck by a tornado again this past March—the fifth tornado to hit Moore in five years—kids like J. Michael Alarcon were ready.

“Today we had a tornado in our town,” his father Jesse told the Red Cross. “A couple of days ago you came to my son’s school and gave him the pillowcase full of important things. He took this with him to the shelter today and was more prepared than I was. Thank you.”

In addition, the Red Cross has provided neighborhoods with lifesaving information and tools. In May 2013, an entire Guatemalan family drowned when they sought shelter in a culvert that flooded during the storm. The Red Cross has since made a concerted outreach to the Hispanic community, offering disaster preparedness information and distributing free hand-crank weather radios, which provide critical alerts when severe weather approaches.

### Recovery and Preparedness at a Glance

To help communities affected by the Oklahoma tornadoes in May 2013 recover and become better prepared, the Red Cross has:



Directly assisted nearly **12,000 people** through case management



Visited more than **6,000 apartments and homes** during community canvassing



Helped fund construction of more than **2,600 residential storm shelters**



Provided disaster preparedness information to nearly **21,000 people**



Educated more than **20,000 children** in emergency preparedness



Distributed **1,200 emergency preparedness kits** and **450 weather radios**

For the most current information about the Oklahoma tornado relief and recovery efforts, visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org). All numbers are cumulative and represent Red Cross efforts since May 19, 2013.

## Thank You

The Red Cross mission is to alleviate human suffering in the face of emergencies. Through nearly 70,000 disasters each year, people in need turn to the Red Cross in their darkest hours. Your donation helps us bring comfort to affected communities and families in the wake of disasters and helps provide the resources to guide them through recovery and become better prepared for future emergencies. We are grateful for your trust.