



Healthy, Stable Communities

Building disaster resilient communities: Paul and Sue's Story

Every year, staff of Canadian Red Cross, and volunteers provide hundreds of hours of disaster preparedness information and training to municipalities, corporations, community groups, schools, service clubs, religious organizations, and professional associations. This education fosters a sense of personal preparedness, alleviates fears associated with potential emergency situations and better prepares individuals and communities to respond during crisis.

In 2006, the Simcoe County Branch of the Canadian Red Cross Society, a United Way of Greater Simcoe County funded agency, was able to deliver disaster preparedness information to hundreds of adults and children.

When individuals and communities create a culture to expect the unexpected and plan for it, they know what to do in a crisis. When disaster does strike, they are in better control and recover much faster on an individual and community basis. People learn to help themselves, increasing their feelings of competency and control in the midst of unforeseen events. This contributes to the quality of life by reducing personal vulnerability, building feelings of security for individuals and communities.

Paul attended a Red Cross personal preparedness presentation at his workplace. "After the big blackout, I realized that I wasn't as prepared as I thought. If that had happened in the winter, we would have been in real trouble," said Paul. "I am glad my workplace offered this presentation. Now I and have some tools to prepare for an emergency and protect my family".

During the recovery phase of a disaster, when the media spotlight has often shifted elsewhere, the Canadian Red Cross remains on the scene, helping rebuild lives and communities.

Sue and her daughter Melissa were one of several families to receive Red Cross assistance through the Personal Disaster Assistance program. When fire destroyed part of Sue's home, she had nowhere to go while her landlord arranged for the necessary repairs.

“I was so grateful to see the Red Cross volunteer. I was not sure what I was going to do. They were able to provide reassurance and assistance at a very difficult time. It won't be easy but we will be OK”.

The Red Cross network is vast, but their approach is simple. All Canadian Red Cross programs and activities are guided by the Fundamental Principles of Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality. These principles allow Red Cross to provide help immediately to whoever needs it, wherever they are, whatever their race, political beliefs, religion, social status, or culture.

Thanks to funding provided by United Way of Greater Simcoe County, the Red Cross Disaster Management program in Simcoe County will continue to build disaster resilient communities.



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