



Greater Kalamazoo Area Chapter
*Serving the people of Allegan, Cass, Kalamazoo
and St. Joseph Counties*
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NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Residents Escape Fire on Elm Street

KALAMAZOO, MI, September 17, 2009 – The Greater Kalamazoo Area Chapter of the American Red Cross was called to the scene of an apartment fire in one Kalamazoo's historic districts last night; the fire was reported shortly after 10:00 p.m. A ten-unit apartment building was heavily damaged by the fire which left 14 residents homeless. A local Red Cross disaster action team had six caseworkers on site to assist residents with their immediate emergency disaster caused needs. Temporary shelter, clothing and food were provided.

As of 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, Sept.17 the Red Cross had assisted 8 people and expects to see 6 more within the next few days. Anyone who was a resident of the Elm St. building, affected by the fire, and has not been in contact with the Red Cross is urged to call the chapter at (269) 353-6180 for assistance.

The Elm St fire is the second multi-unit fire in the chapter's young 2010 fiscal year. The last two fiscal years saw unprecedented increases in the number of multi-unit fires and home fires in general. Although many do not realize it, the largest component of local disaster relief is house fires. The Local Disaster Relief Fund allows us to respond to a disaster before we know how much it will cost, how long it will last, and how many donations we get in.

The American Red Cross helps with immediate disaster related need of victims until other resources are able to help get them back on their feet. Disaster victims need essential items right away, such as food, shelter and mental health counseling. In order to respond to anyone with disaster-caused needs whenever and wherever a disaster occurs, the Red Cross must have money available immediately. The immediate response that the residents of our four county area (Allegan, Cass, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph) count on from the Red Cross is funded by the Local Disaster Relief Fund.

You can help the victims of house fires and thousands of other disasters across the country each year by making a financial gift to the Local Disaster Relief. For more information on the Greater Kalamazoo Area Chapter of the American Red Cross you can visit the Chapter's website at www.greaterkzooredcross.org. For more information on the American Red Cross and its role in disaster response, visit its website at www.redcross.org.

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