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**American Red Cross, Greater Cleveland Chapter responds
to ten residential fires over the weekend**

CLEVELAND, Ohio – February 21, 2006 – This past weekend the American Red Cross, Greater Cleveland Chapter responded to ten house fires in the Greater Cleveland area, including Parma, Cleveland, East Cleveland and Euclid. The Red Cross Disaster Action Team offered assistance to 11 families, providing them with immediate needs -- shelter, meals and clothing. In all, 47 adults and children were affected by the weekend fires.

According to the Nation Fire Protection Association, the winter months are the most common times for fires to occur – four out of seven home fires occur December through February. Are you prepared for a fire? The Greater Cleveland Chapter wants to help you stay safe with tips on fire prevention.

Be Prepared

- Replace smoke alarms that are 10 or more years old
- Install smoke alarms inside and outside every sleeping room and on every floor of your home
- Replace smoke alarm batteries twice a year – spring and fall – and test smoke alarms monthly to make sure they are working properly
- Design a floor plan for each floor in your home. Pick two ways out of each room and practice escaping from each room twice a year. Be sure the floor plan is visible and available for every family member
- Post emergency numbers near every phone for local emergency services
- Do not use candles for lighting if the power goes out. Use flashlights only

The Greater Cleveland Chapter helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies by providing shelter, food, clothing and mental health counseling to families affected by disasters in Cuyahoga, Geauga and Lake counties. All disaster relief is free and is made possible by generous donations from the American people.

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