

## PG E And The American Red Cross Reach Out To More Than 700,000 Californians

Written by Australian Business

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SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 2, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- The American Red Cross and Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) today announced an important milestone in honor of National Fire Prevention Month –training, educating or engaging more than 700,000 residents throughout Northern and Central California as part of the [Ready Neighborhoods initiative](#)

In 2012, PG&E announced a \$2.5 million initiative to provide residents and communities with emergency preparedness training and education to help build safer communities in California

. Together, the American Red Cross and PG&E aim to reach more than one million residents by 2014.

This year, the Ready Neighborhoods initiative will build on its success by launching fire prevention events and outreach in Bakersfield, Fresno and Sacramento during the month of October in honor of National Fire Prevention Month.

"Through the Ready Neighborhoods initiative, the Red Cross Central Valley is empowering families to effectively prepare for and respond to emergencies, ultimately helping communities be more resilient following a disaster," said Ellen Knapp, Regional Chief Executive Officer for the Central Valley Region. She went on to state that "during National Fire Prevention Month the Central Valley Red Cross will launch Season Three of Team Firestopper, a program that will educate thousands of families on home fire prevention. This education is extremely important since volunteers in the Central Valley are responding to families affected by a home fire every 15 hours."

The Red Cross' Team Firestopper project offers a comprehensive outreach and training

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program on the simple steps that residents can take to protect their homes and families from fires. The Firestopper program targets communities that have high incidents of fires, and will include various forms of outreach including community canvassing, home fire safety visits and safety fair seminars.

"The terrain in California is as diverse as our customer base, making this part of the country susceptible to earthquakes, storms, wildfires and other natural disasters," said Ezra Garrett

, PG&E vice president of community relations and chief sustainability officer. "Public safety is PG&E's highest priority, and the Red Cross is a trusted partner in supporting our customers during times of emergency. We are proud to bring the Ready Neighborhoods initiative to cities across Northern and Central California

, and working with the Red Cross is a great way to help customers learn about fire safety."

PG&E employees are also strong supporters of the American Red Cross, personally pledging more than \$75,000 to the humanitarian organization last year.

During National Fire Prevention Month in October, PG&E and the American Red Cross remind Californians that first responders may not be able to respond quickly to everyone who needs help during times of crisis. That's why personal preparedness is so important. PG&E offers the following information to keep you and your home or business safe from fire:

- Be sure smoke alarms are installed throughout your building.
- If your smoke alarms run on batteries, or have battery back-up power, replace batteries at least once per year. If the low battery warning beeps, replace the battery immediately. All smoke alarms in your building should be tested once a month using the alarm test button.
- Keep fire extinguishers in your building. Be sure to keep a fire extinguisher in high-risk areas such as the kitchen and workshop, and know how to use it.
- Know what to do in case of a grease or electrical fire. Use baking soda, or if a pan is on fire, smother the flames with a lid. Never use water to put out a fire on a stove.
- If leaking gas starts to burn, do not try to put the flame out. Call 9-1-1 and PG&E immediately. If it is safe to do so, turn off the gas service shutoff valve normally located near the gas meter.

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides

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international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information about your local Red Cross region, please visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) or visit us on Twitter at [@RedCross](https://twitter.com/RedCross) .

[Pacific Gas and Electric Company \(PG&E\)](#) , a subsidiary of [PG&E Corporation](#)

(NYSE:

[PCG](#)

), and the PG&E Corporation Foundation strive to power strong communities throughout Northern and Central California

. In 2012, PG&E contributed more than

\$23 million

to more than 1,500 charitable organizations, including matching the generosity of employees who donated more than

\$6 million

and volunteered more than 41,000 hours to company-supported events. Community investments are funded entirely by the company's shareholders. For more information, visit

[www.pge.com/community](http://www.pge.com/community)

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