



**American  
Red Cross**



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### **Community Partnerships Supported Red Cross Efforts During The Recent Flooding**

**(SACRAMENTO, CA)** –Cal Expo and State Fair joined in the disaster response effort through a partnership with the American Red Cross during Northern California's most recent flooding and Oroville Dam incident.

The Red Cross and Cal Expo have long been neighbors on Exposition Boulevard but the opportunity to enhance that relationship came in February with the Oroville Dam Spillway evacuation. With only hours to rally a large scale response the Red Cross reached out to Cal Expo for help. Over 180,000 people were told to evacuate from their homes as the authorities detected a potential weakness in the 700-foot-tall Oroville Dam. It was estimated that if the spillway broke there would be a 30-foot wall of water surging south into communities downstream.

When the call went out to Cal Expo to serve as a shelter the resounding response was "Yes, we can help."

"For more than 160 years the California State Fair has been the one constant setting for celebrating and showcasing the best of our State, and in times of emergency a safe haven for those in need," says Rick Pickering, C.E.O. "During this emergency, the Red Cross and their dedicated volunteers exemplified what has long made California great, its people."

The shelter at Cal Expo opened on February 13 and remained open until February 23. During that time the shelter tallied 261 overnight stays, 5,000 meals and snacks served, 700 volunteer hours and 800 health and mental health contacts. In addition, evacuees brought 11 RV's into the Cal Expo RV Park. These families and individuals also came into the shelter for meals, information and to use the resources in the shelter.

Gary Strong, CEO for the Red Cross of Gold Country Region was a frequent visitor to the shelter and was very impressed with the Cal Expo staff and their willingness to do whatever it took to make sure that the evacuees had a safe place to stay while they were out of their homes. "This is one of those partnerships that we hope we won't have to activate again but we also hope will last a long time," Strong said.

The residents of the shelter were also extremely happy with the facility and the support from the Cal Expo staff. "The staff was so warm and inviting. They kept everything so clean and organized. No one judged us and everyone was so respectful," shared Jennifer Moss, an evacuee from the town of Linda. "We came here afraid and worried, and the folks here helped ease our fears. I'd like to thank everyone at Cal Expo and the American Red Cross for all you've done for us."

#### **About the American Red Cross**

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 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, please visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) or [cruzrojaamericana.org](http://cruzrojaamericana.org), or visit us on Twitter at @RedCross

#### **About California Exposition and State Fair**

Cal Expo is home to the California State Fair and plays host to hundreds of other signature events each year. The Cal Expo property is also home to Bonney Field, a premier sports and entertainment venue with seating of 11,000. Featuring 400 acres of open space along the American River Parkway and 350 beautifully landscaped acres, Cal Expo was dedicated as a place to celebrate California's achievements, industries, agriculture, diversity of its people, traditions and trends that shape the Golden State's future. The California State Fair is honored to celebrate its 50th anniversary at Cal Expo in 2017. Join us for the California State Fair July 14 - 30, 2017.

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