

SCV Residents, Businesses Donate \$51,000 to Wildfire Relief So Far

Santa Clarita Valley Disaster Coalition Provides Safety Net for Fire Victims

SANTA CLARITA, Calif., Dec. 1, 2007 -- Created in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the non-profit, all-volunteer Santa Clarita Valley Disaster Coalition (SCVDC) is recognized by the City of Santa Clarita and other local agencies as the best resource for collecting and dispensing funds and gift cards to those who have suffered loss as a result of a natural disaster or community-wide emergency.

To date, area residents and businesses have contributed more than \$50,000 in cash and nearly \$1,000 gift cards in the aftermath of the October wildfires that impacted more than two dozen families and a handful of local nonprofit organizations. One hundred percent of the donations will benefit victims; the SCV Coalition has no administrative fees or overhead costs.

Comprised of a caring group of community leaders, including representatives from local government, businesses, faith-based organizations, schools, and nonprofit organizations who seek to help those in need from our area, rebuild their lives, the Coalition also works to address the need for increased awareness of local disaster preparedness and response plans.

The Coalition is currently working with the local American Red Cross to reach out to fire victims and assess their needs. The goal is to fill in any gaps in the provision of assistance for victims. The SCV Disaster Coalition is currently utilizing social workers from the Santa Clarita Senior Center (Committee On Aging) to assess each family's situation and provide recommendations to the Coalition on the type of assistance appropriate to provide through the donations made to the Coalition. The Coalition is a non-profit 501C3 organization, under the umbrella of the Senior Center.

As of now, the Red Cross has 27 open cases for local families impacted by the wildfires. While the information is proprietary to protect each family's confidentiality, the Coalition is reaching out to each and every family, offering assessment services for assistance through the Coalition.

When assistance has been provided to the families, the Coalition will begin assisting nonprofit agencies impacted by the fires, offering financial assistance as deemed appropriate for each agency.

The Coalition continues to accept donations of money and gift cards only. Donations can be made by mail or dropped off at any of four SCV locations. To donate services, contact the Coalition's Carl Goldman at 661-298-1220.

For more info, visit www.scvcoalition.com.