

BLOOD EMERGENCY READINESS CORPS ACTIVATED TO RESPOND TO THE EXTREME WEATHER IN TEXAS

The Blood Emergency Readiness Corps was activated to send blood to hospitals in and around Perryton, Texas, after Thursday's tornados.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA, USA, June 16, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Today, the national Blood Emergency Readiness Corps (BERC) was activated to send needed blood to the hospitals in and around Perryton, Texas, scene of Thursday's tornados that swept through the town and claimed at least three lives and left dozens more injured. Perryton is approximately 115 miles northeast of Amarillo, in the state's panhandle.

"Our BERC Network was activated to help our partner blood center, Our Blood Institute at Coffee Memorial Blood Center, meet the need of trauma patients at the local hospital in Perryton, Texas and those transported to Amarillo, Texas," said Nelson Hellwig, CEO of the Alliance for Community Transfusion Services and Administrator of the BERC Program.

As part of their on-call week, the following community-based blood centers have rushed blood to the region: Blood Bank of Hawaii (Honolulu); Cascade Regional Blood Services (Tacoma, Washington); Houchin Community Blood Bank (Bakersfield, California); ImpactLife (Davenport, Iowa); Inova Blood Center (Falls Church, Virginia); LifeStream Blood Bank (San Bernardino, California); Mississippi Blood Services (Flowood); Northern California Community Blood Bank (Eureka); South Texas Blood & Tissue (San Antonio); Stanford Blood Center; and We Are Blood (Austin, Texas).

"We are seeing the tremendous power of communities coming together in a time of need," said Amanda Hess, Vice President, Donor Relations and Marketing with ImpactLife. "Having consistently strong donor and blood drive support in advance of a crisis is critical. Routine donations made by volunteer donors allow us to assist with disaster response while meeting ongoing needs of the communities we serve."

Today's activation marks the fifth time since its inception in September 2021 that the BERC Network has been called upon to provide blood during a national emergency.

"There are no words to express how deeply saddened we are about the loss of lives and the many injured," said Dr. John Armitage, President and CEO of Our Blood Institute at Coffee Memorial Blood Center. "Because of BERC and its support from wonderful donors across the

country, we can help the people of Perryton in a moment of crisis. Times like these remind us of why we continuously urge our community to donate blood."

The blood from the BERC Network of blood banks is being sent to Our Blood Institute at Coffee Memorial Blood Center in Amarillo, the steward of the local blood supply in that part of Texas.

The Blood Emergency Readiness Corps (BERC), a collaborative effort of 36 community blood centers, was founded in 2021 to meet immediate transfusion needs when faced with large scale emergency situations that require blood transfusions. These blood centers commit to collecting extra units on a rotating "on call" schedule to create an available supply of blood for emergency needs.

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