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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RED CROSS RESPONDS TO 10 ALARM BROOKLYN FIRE WITH SUPPORT FOR EMERGENCY PERSONNEL AND RESIDENTS

New York - May 3, 2006 -- Throughout the more than 36 hours that firefighters were on the scene battling the 10 alarm blaze that rushed through a network of abandoned warehouses on the Brooklyn waterfront on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 2 and 3, the American Red Cross in Greater New York (ARC/GNY) responded with support for the New York City Fire Department and other emergency personnel, and initiated plans to provide services for citizens if any were affected or displaced by the fire.

“Whenever there is a fire or other emergency in New York City, we always arrive on the scene immediately to offer our help and support to first responders and to all citizens who are affected,” said Bob Imbornoni, deputy response officer of operations, American Red Cross in Greater New York. “We coordinate our efforts with the various city departments to ensure that we provide the services required by emergency personnel and to help those who are displaced from their homes during emergencies. Our staff and the support of our dedicated volunteers do this many times every day throughout the city.”

As the number of alarms continued to mount to eventually reach 10, creating the largest response in New York City (not counting the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001) since August 1995 at the St. George Hotel fire in Brooklyn, the Red Cross initially deployed an Emergency Response Vehicle (ERV) and then rushed an additional ERV to the Greenpoint section of the borough.

More than 20 staff and volunteers coordinated an action plan to provide the more than 350 firefighters with water, snacks and food during the long day on Tuesday. Approximately 300 meals were served by early afternoon of the first day. The Red Cross remained on location through the late evening to provide another 500 meals and almost 1,000 beverages to firefighters and other emergency personnel. As firefighters continued to extinguish the blaze into Wednesday, a Red Cross ERV remained on the scene to provide them with snacks and beverages.

Waddy Gonzalez, senior director of response for ARC/GNY, coordinated the Red Cross response and met with senior officials, including those of the Office of Emergency Management, to determine the scope of the fire and its affect on the neighboring businesses and residential community. Residents among the diverse population of young and old of many nationalities were not evacuated. If relocation was necessary, the Red Cross would have established a reception center in the area to help citizens obtain shelter, food and other essential services.

In Brooklyn, the Red Cross responds, on average, three times each day. In the first four months of 2006, the chapter responded to 350 disasters in Brooklyn and provided food, shelter, financial assistance and counseling to 2,081 Brooklyn adults and children. This includes recent five and six alarm fires at which more than 100 residents needed the comfort and care that can be provided by only the Red Cross.

As of April 20, 2006, the staff and volunteers of ARC/GNY in New York City and Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Sullivan Counties have responded to 1,085 fires, building collapses, blackouts, floods and other emergencies and have assisted 5,449 adults and children with food, shelter and/or counseling following a disaster.

Now in its 100th year, the American Red Cross in Greater New York (ARC/GNY) helps people in New York City and Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Sullivan Counties avoid, prepare for and respond to emergencies. ARC/GNY provides immediate aid to more than 100,000 people affected by more than 3,000 emergencies a year – from fires and water main breaks, to building collapses and blackouts. The Red Cross also helps New Yorkers stay prepared for emergencies by offering hundreds of health and safety courses on such subjects as first aid, disaster preparedness, swim safety and adult/child CPR throughout the region. For more information, call 1-877 RED CROSS (1-877-733-2767), or visit www.nyredcross.org.

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