



# British Columbia Floods



## THANK YOU FOR BEING THERE FOR B.C. FAMILIES IMPACTED BY FLOODING

When you're forced from your home in the middle of the night by rising flood waters, it's a very frightening experience but this is what many people in the Kootenay Boundary region faced this spring.

Thanks to our generous donors, Red Cross personnel immediately responded to the Kootenay Boundary Regional District's request to help impacted residents as quickly as possible. Together, we sent our volunteers to set up emergency lodging and reception centres in both Midway and Grand Forks so people evacuated from their homes had a safe place to go.

The Red Cross is immensely grateful for the support of individuals and corporate partners during this time. We also want to thank the Province of British Columbia for matching

donations and for supporting the Household Emergency Assistance Program, to help people who were most significantly impacted.

For the individuals and families who have returned home, the Red Cross provided clean-up kits and emotional support. For others, the recovery process will continue for many months to come.

Disasters have no timeline, and the on-going generosity of our supporters and partners means we can help those who are experiencing the stress of rebuilding their homes and communities for as long as it takes and for as long as they need us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kimberley Nemrava".

**Kimberley Nemrava**  
VP, Canadian Red Cross BC & Yukon

---

# A letter from the B.C. Government



The 2018 flooding season was one of the worst on record in British Columbia - it damaged homes, challenged communities and displaced thousands of British Columbians. I saw firsthand the sheer devastation in Grand Forks, the community hardest hit by the unprecedented flooding. I also saw the incredible resilience, strength and perseverance of the people in this community.

Helping people through such a catastrophic disaster requires swift action and strong partnerships. We saw those partnerships in action as we worked with the Canadian Red Cross to provide critical supports and services with help from the generous donations of British Columbians. Together with the Canadian Red Cross we launched a first-of-its kind Household Emergency Assistance Program (HEAP) to help people in Grand Forks and the Kootenay Boundary Regional District with essential housing, food, utilities and transportation support.

Three months after this event, many of the families and residents living in these communities are only just beginning their long path to recovery. The Province of British Columbia and the Canadian Red Cross remain

unwavering in their commitment to help the affected communities as they rebuild their lives.

Our strong working relationship with the Canadian Red Cross is based on a shared commitment to the long-term recovery of communities impacted by floods and other disasters and we will continue to provide support through our partnership now and into the future.

We all have a role to play in times of crisis. I commend the Canadian Red Cross for its important contributions to our public safety and wellbeing. We are proud of what we have been able to accomplish together, and we look forward to continuing to strengthen our partnership and help British Columbians in their time of need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Rice". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Jennifer Rice**

Parliamentary Secretary for Emergency Preparedness

---

# How your kindness made all the difference for Tony



“It was an incredible help, and it was instant.”

– Tony Kalmakoff

**A lifelong Grand Forks resident, Tony Kalmakoff says he’s never seen floodwaters that high in the Kettle River.** He initially had to call for help from the hood of his truck, but was then forced to leave it, his house, and all his belongings behind.

“It’s difficult,” says Tony, who can’t return home until his property is assessed. “I’ve been living with floods all my life, but the water never came into the house.”

Thankfully, Tony didn’t have to face the disaster alone. “The Red Cross was in Grand Forks immediately,” he says. “It was an incredible help, and it was instant.”

Over the past three months, thanks to generous donors, the Red Cross has provided Tony with financial assistance to help him with his immediate needs.

Now that the water has receded, a clean-up kit is helping with the next task at hand. “It’s like Red Cross knew exactly what we needed. A stiff broom to loosen the silt, gloves, mops, face masks, and cleaning solution,” says Tony.

Over the summer, Tony also received support through the Household Emergency Assistance Program developed by the Canadian Red Cross and the Government of British Columbia. The program provides financial assistance to residents who are in limbo as they wait for news on their damaged homes.

Tony hopes he will be able to return home soon. “There will be major changes, but the community will still be here. We will carry on.” And the Red Cross will be alongside.

# Meet Barb, a dedicated volunteer bringing your support to B.C. families



“I was able to cry and hug some of the people I helped.”

– Barb Marsh, Red Cross volunteer

**When Barb Marsh heard that Grand Forks was flooded, she knew where she needed to be.**

A year ago, she had signed up to be a volunteer with the B.C. Red Cross team. Now, her training was put to the test as she helped manage a reception centre for her flood-hit neighbours from the next town over.

“I was able to cry and hug some of the people I helped, as well as provide them with much-needed financial assistance for basic necessities and a safe place to stay,” she said.

But it was only after driving through Grand Forks this spring that Barb saw how the flood damage truly affected the community. “It really

makes you aware of the power of Mother Nature, and just how quickly a person’s life can change. Although I’ve seen high water before, I’ve never seen this degree of destruction.”

It gave her a real sense of the experience that she was a part of.

“My respect and admiration for the community is immense; the strength and resiliency I saw there will stay with me forever. And aside from helping the clients, I was able to make lasting friendships with other volunteers.”

Together, volunteers like Barb were able to contribute more than 12,700 hours to help those impacted during the floods.

# Thank you!

## Your generosity at work



The Canadian Red Cross would like to thank individuals, businesses and governments for donating more than **\$1.2 million** towards our response to the B.C. flooding.

With your support, we have ensured that everyone who needed support received it. Our committed volunteers gave over 12,700 hours of their time to helping their fellow British Columbians, running emergency shelters, distributing hundreds of clean-up kits to help people return home, and providing financial assistance to help those most affected.



### 2 shelters

managed and staffed by the Red Cross



### 2 reception centres

supported by the Red Cross



### 808 households

registered for help from the Red Cross



### 190 volunteers

engaged in the flood response, working a total of **12,727 hours**



### 700+ individuals

received financial assistance



### 788 Clean-up kits

distributed

Thank you for your compassion towards those affected by the flooding in British Columbia. Your generosity has helped them confront and overcome this difficult moment in their lives.