



**Alberta  
REPORT BACK  
TO THE COMMUNITY**

2014-15



**CANADIAN  
RED CROSS  
CROIX-ROUGE  
CANADIENNE**

# MESSAGE FROM THE PROVINCIAL DIRECTOR AND THE PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR



If there was a theme for the past 12 months, it could be called a year of building resiliency and capacity. In 2013, a major focus was responding to the devastating 2013 southern Alberta floods. In 2014-15, we shifted emphasis to longer-term recovery and capacity-building efforts in regions impacted by disaster. From an organizational

standpoint, we took time during the past year to focus on the full scope of quality services that the Red Cross provides to Albertans.

One of the strengths of the Red Cross is an ability to respond to needs within the local community while building on community strengths and ensuring that priorities and quality of service meet our national standards. Whether Disaster Management, Violence and Abuse Prevention, the Health Equipment Loan Program, Detention Monitoring, First Aid, Swimming and Water Safety, First Nation and Aboriginal Engagement, Restoring Family Links, Basic Needs, or International Humanitarian Law, the Red Cross ranks among the most recognized and trusted organizations on the globe.

This report provides our successes from the past year. During the upcoming year, I look forward to continue working with the Provincial Advisory Committee and the hundreds of dedicated volunteers across Alberta, as well as colleagues, partners, donors, government, and citizens to build on these successes and to increase our capacity to provide services across the province. Thank you for connecting with the Red Cross and inviting us into your community.



**JENNIFER MCMANUS**  
Provincial Director, Alberta



As Chair of the Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC) for the Canadian Red Cross in Alberta, it is my pleasure to look back on the past year with a sense of accomplishment. The PAC is a group of volunteers across the province that provides a connection to the community and serves in an advisory capacity.

The PAC serves as a community connector for the Red Cross across Alberta. We're proud to represent the Red Cross in our communities at events and recognitions as well as meetings with stakeholders, provincial partners, government, and the general public.

In an advisory role, the PAC also worked in concert with the provincial director to establish committees in Government Relations, Disaster Management, Community Health and Wellness, and Volunteer Resource Management. These committees are designed to bring a community perspective, advise on strategic direction, trends and best practises.

I would also like to acknowledge my PAC colleagues: Chris Diamant (Calgary); Warren Szkolnicki (Calgary); Allan Works (Red Deer); Ed Stevenson (Red Deer); Diane Carter (Valleyview); Nicholas Conradi (Edmonton); and John McCook (Edmonton) and thank them for their dedication and support.



**PATRICK LICHOWIT**  
Chair, Provincial Advisory Committee (Calgary)

## Red Cross Fundamental Principles

**HUMANITY**

**IMPARTIALITY**

**NEUTRALITY**

**INDEPENDENCE**

**VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

**UNITY**

**UNIVERSALITY**

## Report Contributors:

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Taylor Merkley

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# ASSISTING DURING POWER OUTAGE

Canadian Red Cross volunteers assist during 2014 Calgary power outage

Thousands of Calgarians were plunged into darkness when the power went out in parts of downtown on Thanksgiving weekend in 2014 following an electrical underground fire. When it became clear the outage would last several days, Jane Marston, health manager for an apartment building in the affected area, and two resident managers knew they needed help.

The Calgary Emergency Management Agency asked the Canadian Red Cross to assist about 85 residents of the 25-storey building, many of them elderly, who remained at home during the outage. "It was phenomenal," Marston says of the volunteer response, "they were very compassionate and approachable." Twelve volunteers spent four days at the building. They hauled 112 flats

of water up 25 flights of stairs and went door-to-door checking on those who remained. They gave out garbage bags for spoiled food and provided emotional comfort. "It took a lot of pressure and stress off of our staff," Debbie Newman, executive director of the Drop-In Centre says, adding that the Red Cross volunteers "... were very well trained. They were accommodating, they knew exactly what to do." The building staff cooked two turkeys and Red Cross volunteers delivered hot turkey dinners to tenants. The power was off for five days. In that time, volunteers from Red Deer, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat joined their Calgary colleagues and were stationed at 21 other downtown buildings.

## PROVIDING HEALTH EQUIPMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

In spring 2015, the Health Equipment Loan Program (HELP) implemented a new model to deliver programming to residents in southeast Alberta.

In this model, Lethbridge serves as a hub for the region, housing the cleaning and technical equipment needed to maintain the program's high standard of quality control. Lethbridge also serves as the distribution centre for the Medicine Hat HELP office. "This model allows us to offer the same level of service, but more efficiently", says Rhonda Schwab, provincial operations manager with the Red Cross in Alberta, "especially since the program loans approximately 6,000 pieces of health equipment to more than 3,000 clients in approximately 75 communities around Lethbridge."

For those in the community, transition to the new model has been seamless. "Feedback from residents using HELP has remained positive even as we worked through details behind the scenes," says Cindy Fehr, assistant coordinator, operations support at the Lethbridge office.



Jordan Hallam and Cindy Fehr at the Red Cross office in Lethbridge

HELP plays a vital role in the community by providing health equipment, such as walkers, crutches, bathroom aids, and wheelchairs, to residents recovering from illness, injury or surgery, for a short term loan to assist recovery at home. There are six HELP locations across Alberta serving urban and rural clients. The costs to run the program are covered primarily through donations from residents who use the service and from a partnership with Alberta Health Services.

# RED CROSS BY THE NUMBERS



Canada-wide stats

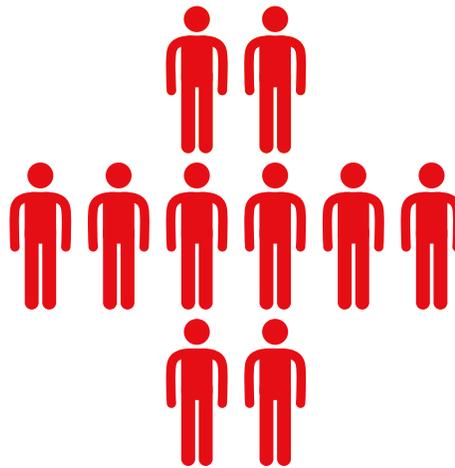


Alberta stats

## OUR STRENGTH

is in our volunteers and donors

 around  
**20,000 VOLUNTEERS**  
from coast to coast



 in Alberta  
**712 VOLUNTEERS**

## READY TO RESPOND

when disaster strikes

  
**39,121**  
Canadians directly  
assisted following  
a disaster



  
**1,114 PEOPLE**  
assisted after a personal  
disaster including house fires

## READY TO SUPPORT

those in our communities

  
Restoring Family Links  
program reunited  
**456 FAMILIES**  
separated by conflict,  
disaster or migration



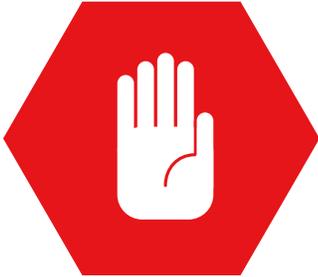
  
here in Alberta  
**35**  
**BENEFICIARIES**  
found their families with help  
from the same program

# READY TO PREVENT

injuries and abuse

 **697,382** Canadians took violence, bullying, and abuse prevention training.

 **88,000+** children, youth and adults reached by the same training in Alberta



**1,114,123** Canadians took Red Cross Swimming and Water Safety lessons

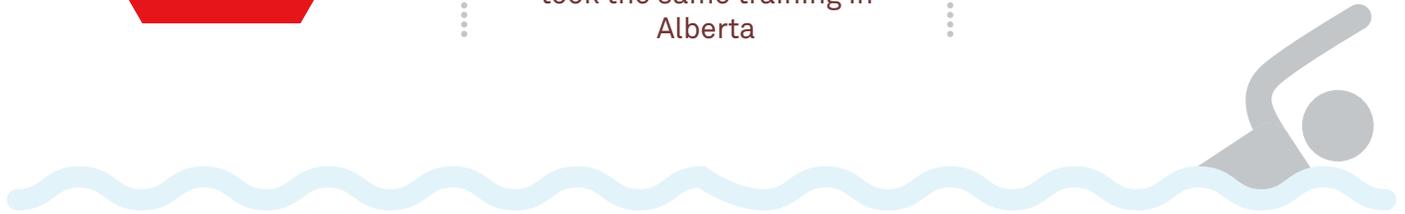


**178,580** people took the same training in Alberta



 **609,367** Canadians took Red Cross First Aid courses

 **145,791** people took the same training in Alberta



## HEALTH EQUIPMENT LOAN PROGRAM (HELP)



**48,196** articles loaned through the Health Equipment Loan Program



## INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS

Red Cross took part in **236** missions in **51** countries

### Emergency and Recovery Activities

**141** Canadian Red Cross delegates were deployed

**4** Ebola Field Hospital Deployments were supported

### Mother, New Born and Child Health, Disaster Preparedness and Violence Prevention

**7,035,734** beneficiaries

**7,178** volunteers

**1,293** communities supported



# LESSONS LEARNED AT INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW CONFERENCE 2015

(l-r): Martin Lacourt, Kathleen Mahoney, Cdr. Andrew Thomson and Catherine Gribbin at the 2015 International Humanitarian Law Conference

How relevant is international humanitarian law in modern conflicts? This depends on whether the laws are applied and respected. It's also important to remember that "laws of war" are constantly changing.

These are a few of the perspectives presented in February at the second annual International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Conference held at the University of Calgary (U of C).

University students and senior legal professionals gathered for the event hosted by the Canadian Red Cross in partnership with the university. Also, among conference guests was Tom Jackson, Canadian actor, singer, philanthropist, and CRC ambassador.

The day began with a thorough overview of international humanitarian law and its relationship to the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement by Catherine Gribbin, senior legal advisor for the Canadian Red Cross. Other participants included Commander Andrew Thomson, director of international and operational law for the Canadian Armed Forces' Judge Advocate General, Martin Lacourt, armed forces delegate for the International Committee of the Red Cross, and U of C law professor, Kathleen Mahoney.

In the end, all speakers agreed that law only protects people when it is respected. It is not the relevance of law that matters, but rather the respect for it and the application that is most pertinent.

## SPORTS AND RESPECT EDUCATION COMBINED FOR AN EXCELLENT OUTCOME

Graham Parsons from the Sylvan Lake Hockey Camp and Carlia Schwab

As long as she can remember, Carlia Schwab has been interested in sports, working with youth, and community based humanitarian causes. Thanks to a partnership with the Red Cross and hockey camps affiliated with the Hockey Alberta Association, she found an opportunity to combine these interests.

A provincial education coordinator with the Canadian Red Cross, located at the Red Deer office, Carlia had an opportunity to reach out to the local sports community. "A few years ago, we worked with several professional female hockey leaders/athletes and developed a module specifically for female amateur sports to promote safe and respectful environments, adapted from our curriculum presented each year to the Western Hockey League (WHL)," said Carlia. The Red Cross has been a long-standing partner with the WHL and Hockey Canada to promote Respect Education initiatives.



Adapting this content for summer hockey camps was a good fit. This initiative is also generously supported in part by a grant from the Canadian Women's Foundation.

Since then, her engagement with the sports community expanded. In 2014 Carlia began to work with the Sylvan Lake Hockey Camp to provide sports-focused abuse prevention sessions to all youth participants in their summer hockey camps. This year, in addition to returning to the Sylvan Lake Hockey Camp, Carlia received invitations from the Westlock summer hockey camp and the Alberta U16 female provincial camp to provide similar workshops.

"It's gratifying to work with the community and receive positive feedback," says Carlia. "This shows we're on track, reaching more youth and making a difference."



Aboriginal Water Safety Program

## WATER SAFETY PROGRAM TRAINING LASTING LEADERS

When Alberta Red Cross swim instructors head to rural aboriginal communities to teach water safety in summer, they're hoping to do more than teach kids how to swim and teens how to lifeguard. They're looking to train a whole new generation of water safety instructors.

Now in its third year, the Aboriginal Water Safety Program (AWSP) offers an expanded range of safety classes and courses, where participants are ready to build on their previous Red Cross water safety and swim training.

In 2015, the AWSP aimed to reach up to 200 children, youths, and adults in First Nations and Metis communities across the province — their biggest number yet. Participants not only choose from traditional swimming, water sports and water safety classes (including CPR), but those with experience also have the

option of working toward becoming Red Cross-certified assistant lifeguards, assistant water safety instructors and water safety instructors.

“Our goal doesn't just stop at teaching children about water safety and strong swimming skills. We also want to help train the next generation of instructors who can continue to pass those skills along to their community members,” says Lesley-Anne Morley, water safety program representative for southern Alberta.

The AWSP is funded through Alberta Sport Connection and is coordinated with the help of Alberta Future Leaders. The success of the program is making waves across the country, too — neighbouring agencies in Saskatchewan are looking for more details on how to launch their own similar program.

## PREPARING TO BE PREPARED

Emergencies can occur anywhere, anytime, and unpreparedness in the face of an emergency is an unsettling prospect. If you asked Kristy Poirier of First Aid & Safety Training Services Inc. ([www.safetyclass.ca](http://www.safetyclass.ca)), her unambiguous advice would be, “Get trained. Be prepared. Know it before you need it!”

Poirier speaks from a place of experience; her sixteen years of involvement with first aid training has lent her a uniquely informed perspective on the subject. Her company is now one of the largest providers of Red Cross first aid in northern Alberta. Although most of her clients attend training sessions as a requirement of their employment, everyone could benefit from learning these skills.

First Aid & Safety Training Services partners with the Red Cross to deliver high quality first aid training to anybody interested. Poirier says that not many first aid training programs can beat the Red Cross “interactive and enjoyable” approach, which mixes fun with education

and employs diverse training materials to engage every learning style. Red Cross first aid trainers like Poirier understand that no two emergency situations are quite the same, and prefer to focus on teaching students how to react to stressful, unpredictable circumstances calmly. The skills may be applied to a variety of situations. “What's important,” Poirier adds, “is that you make it home safe at the end of the day.”



Kristy Poirier of First Aid & Safety Training Services Inc.

# ALBERTA FLOODS: TWO YEAR PROGRESS UPDATE



## BY THE NUMBERS

\$43.3 million raised (95 cents of every dollar helps to support those impacted)

### Projected Allocation of Funds:

- \$23.6 M** Assistance to individuals and families
- \$9.9 M** Shelter and home clean-up, repair and rehabilitation
- \$7.2 M** Community initiatives and support to small businesses
- \$2.6 M** Community resiliency and disaster preparedness

As of June 2015, **\$36.2 M** of the total raised had been spent, to assist more than **7,700 families**, fund **70 community projects** and help **hundreds of people** with housing repair projects. More details and a copy of the *Alberta Floods: Two Year Progress Report* can be found at [www.redcross.ca/abfloods](http://www.redcross.ca/abfloods)



Valerie Heerema, Red Cross delegate

## ASSISTING WITH THE EBOLA EFFORT IN SIERRA LEONE

Canadian Red Cross delegate Valerie Heerema has been a psychosocial delegate for five years. She was compelled to join the Red Cross after watching the 2010 earthquake media coverage in Haiti. With a Masters in Social Work and a Masters of Arts in Counselling, she was a natural fit for the Red Cross psychological first aid program. The program was developed to meet the emotional and psychological needs of people involved in disaster or traumatic event. Heerema helped to deliver this program most recently for the Sierra Leone Ebola effort.

While working at the Ebola treatment centre, the local Sierra Leoneans gave Val the nickname of Vero, which means “she who cares.” Every person she worked with was either impacted or knew someone who was impacted by the disease but “in a state of great adversity, the people were able to carry on,” says Heerema.

## OUR SUPPORTERS

Donors who have donated  
**\$10,000** or more in Alberta

The Red Cross would like to thank the following corporate and major gift donors for making a financial investment for local program support in Alberta to the Canadian Red Cross, along with all the other companies, institutions, governments, schools, and thousands of individual donors that gave their support this past year. Thank you for making it possible for the Red Cross to provide life-saving and life-changing services to those in need in Alberta.

Federated Co-Op Ltd.  
Talisman Energy Inc.  
MEG Energy  
Rife Resources Ltd.  
Freehold Royalties Partnership  
RBC Foundation  
Cenovus Employee Foundation  
EnCana Cares Foundation

Mayfield Management Group Ltd.  
Calgary Greek Festival - Hellenic Society of Calgary  
George Schnyder  
Anonymous Fund at The Calgary Foundation  
Tricia Flanagan  
Robert Seal and Joan Robinson  
Vern and Lynn Hult

**THANK YOU!**