



For Immediate Release  
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## **Governor Richardson Encourages State Employees Support to Organizations Assisting California Wildfire Victims**

(Santa Fe, NM) – Today Governor Bill Richardson sent a letter to state employees asking them to consider making a contribution to the American Red Cross or California Volunteers to help victims of the wildfires.

“I am writing to ask you to help a neighbor in need,” Governor Richardson’s letter states. “For four straight days, wind-fueled fires have burned 350,000 acres across Southern California, consuming hundreds of homes and forcing the evacuation of more than 500,000 people. When we’ve been hit hard by forest fires in the past, California has come to our aid. Now it’s our turn and I’d like to ask you to do your part.”

Based on information provided by the Governor of California’s office, individuals are encouraged to make a donation to:

[www.redcross.org/donate/donate.html](http://www.redcross.org/donate/donate.html)  
[www.californiavolunteers.org](http://www.californiavolunteers.org)

In response to a request by the state of California, Governor Richardson is sending two strike firefighting teams with 42 crew members to California to assist in structure protection. The teams are made up of fire departments from throughout New Mexico.

*Text of letter follows:*

October 24, 2007

Dear State Employee,

I am writing to ask you to help a neighbor in need. For four straight days, wind-fueled fires have burned 350,000 acres across Southern California, consuming hundreds of homes and forcing the evacuation of more than 500,000 people.

When we’ve been hit hard by forest fires in the past, California has come to our aid.

Now it’s our turn.

We've been in touch with Governor Schwarzenegger's office since the fires began and offered the assistance of our experienced and capable fire crews. New Mexico is fortunate to have no major fires and have the resources available. Neighbors should help neighbors in their time of need. So, I'm ordering two strike teams to answer California's request and help fight this unprecedented fire.

Firefighters from Farmington, Albuquerque, Angel Fire, Raton, Rio Rancho, Las Vegas, Bernalillo and Los Ranchos de Albuquerque are on their way to California today. Like those New Mexico troops who currently serve overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan, we know they will represent our state proudly.

Now, while our firefighters are helping our western neighbors, I'd like to ask you to do your part, just like during Hurricane Katrina when thousands of state employees gave what they could to help the victims.

The American Red Cross is one of the organizations taking the lead in providing food, shelter, and clothing for thousands who have been evacuated from their homes. More than 500 American Red Cross workers have been working for the past two days. Just last night 11 Red Cross shelters housed more than 3,000 people, but the need for additional help is increasing. Please consider making a donation to the American Red Cross at <http://www.redcross.org/donate/donate.html>

Governor Schwarzenegger's office is also encouraging individuals to also give to: [www.californiavolunteers.org](http://www.californiavolunteers.org).

The rest of America knows New Mexico for the beauty of our state and hospitality of our people. Let's show California that we care about our neighbors.

Thank you for whatever you can give.

Bill Richardson  
Governor  
State of New Mexico