



# BC Fires

## After the smoke: Your support continues to help

**B.C. has finally reached the beginning of the end of an unpredictable fire season. When the province called a state of emergency in August,** thousands of people were evacuated, and thousands of acres burned. Now as we move through September, rain and cold weather are starting to help the firefighters beat the blaze. Recovery has become the top priority for many as school starts again and people start to return to their communities.

And thanks to your support, we can make sure the process is as smooth as possible.

Since the fires began, the Canadian Red Cross has been on hand to assist evacuees with food, shelter, and psychosocial support during this ordeal. As the wildfires are extinguished, we will continue to be there to help the people of B.C. through their recovery process with clean up kits, financial aid, and additional support as evacuation orders are lifted. But it's your generosity that makes this possible.

With your donation, you have helped communities all over the province get back on their feet. The impact from a natural disaster can last for a long time, but together, we can make sure support gets to those that need a helping hand. Thank you for your support.

### 2018 WILDFIRE SEASON

- **1,345,142 hectares** have burned in B.C. so far in 2018. This year surpassed the burn area record of 2017, which was 1,216,000 hectares
- There have been **over 2,000 fires** this year since the season started in April; more fires were caused by lightning than any year since 2009
- Before 2017 and 2018, the worst fire season in B.C. history was 1958 with just 855,000 hectares

# How your support goes the distance: helping hard-to-reach communities



Ye Fan and Lisa Donahoe, Canadian Red Cross Caseworkers, in Nadleh Whut'en First Nation, providing early recovery support to those impacted by the wildfires.

**In a country the size of Canada, many communities are far away from major centres; often they are connected by single highways or roads, making access difficult. This was the case during the summer wildfire season in British Columbia.**

In August, communities across the province were evacuated, and shortly after they were hit by the wild fires. Many homes were damaged or destroyed by the flames. Although access is tricky in isolated locations, the Canadian Red Cross was up for the challenge helping people in remote communities recover.

Michael Sam is the manager for supply chain logistics operations for disaster responses with the Canadian Red Cross. His role involves figuring out what is needed – and how to get it to where it needs to go.

“We don’t always know what the main challenges are going to be in a community,” Michael said, “the power has been cut off which means refrigerators aren’t working, there can be infestations in buildings because animals are looking for shelter. But the biggest challenge is getting supplies and volunteers up there.”

Thankfully, the Red Cross has special trucks that can haul trailers and people up to areas that need assistance. Called a Disaster Response Vehicle, it is built for lasting the duration of a recovery operation: it can carry food, clean up kits, and other basic needs, and then transform into a charging station or a meeting room.

Managers like Michael, and the Canadian Red Cross always work closely with individual communities and local leadership to determine what is most needed and who needs help – and thanks to your support, we can get there no matter the obstacles.

## YOUR GENEROSITY AT WORK

The Canadian Red Cross would like to thank individuals, businesses and governments for donating more than \$1.4 million towards our response to the B.C. fires.

**Here’s what your support has accomplished so far:**



**887 families received financial assistance**

to help as they return to their communities and begin to recover



**250 cots and 980 blankets** distributed

to give evacuees a safe place to sleep



**750 hygiene kits** (soap, shampoo, toothbrush and toothpaste, etc.) distributed to those who had to leave essentials behind



**900 clean-up kits** (broom, gloves, cleaning products, etc.) distributed to those returning home



**30 outreach** visits to bring assistance to remote communities



**5406 hours of service** provided by Red Cross volunteers