



**American Red Cross**  
Hawaii

American Red Cross of Hawaii  
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*Media Alert*  
**MEDIA ALERT**

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## **RED CROSS INNOVATES TO EXPAND HAWAII RESPONSE VEHICLE FLEET**

A donation from Hawaiian Electric and the HEI Charitable Foundation helps launch new national program in Hawaii

**HONOLULU, HI: 10/18/2021** — Sometimes hand-me-downs *can* be exciting: The Red Cross is upcycling vehicles to help with Hawaii’s disaster readiness. With help from Hawaiian Electric and the HEI Charitable Foundation (HEICF), two Dodge RAM Promaster 3500 cargo vans have been delivered to Oahu and Hawaii Island.

Three years ago, the vehicles began intense regular service supporting the Red Cross blood donation program in Tulsa, Oklahoma. To extend the life of the vehicles, the organization is transitioning their role to one of equal importance, but with a little slower pace. In Hawaii, the vans will deliver shelter supplies and clean-up materials, provide canteen needs for first responders and more. Repurposing the vans serves to extend the life of the vehicles and minimize waste while providing expanded service capabilities to local communities.

“These vans are among the first delivered under a nationwide Red Cross program, and we’re glad to help bring them to Hawaii where they can support rural and vulnerable communities in need of life-saving services following a disaster,” said Jim Kelly, Hawaiian Electric Vice President, Government & Community Relations and Corporate Communications and Red Cross board member. The company and HEICF contributed \$39,000 to help cover upfitting, maintenance, and other costs. “We’re pleased to partner with the Red Cross to help build strong, resilient communities and these vans will help them carry out their humanitarian mission.”

Partnerships like this allow the Red Cross to maintain their service to the islands 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Hawaii Red Cross responds to disasters such as home fires once every four days, on average. “We’re so grateful to our friends at Hawaiian Electric and HEICF for assisting in bringing these vehicles to Hawaii,” said Diane Peters-Nguyen, CEO of the

American Red Cross Pacific Islands Region. “The vehicles stand ready to deliver comfort and aid to our neighbors impacted by disaster.”

**ABOUT THE AMERICAN RED CROSS**

*The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides comfort to victims of disasters; teaches skills that save lives; distributes international humanitarian aid; and supports veterans, military members and their families. The Red Cross is a nonprofit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to deliver its mission. For more information, please visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) or follow us on Twitter at @RedCross and @HawaiiRedCross. To send a contribution, mail your check to:*

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