



**American  
Red Cross**

Penn-Jersey  
Blood Services Region

# NEWS RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*

**Contacts:**

Kristy Kane

Tel 215-451-4240

Fax 215-451-2502

kaneKr@usa.redcross.org

June 12, 2008

**American Red Cross**

700 Spring Garden Street

Philadelphia, PA 19123

Tel 215-451-4237

[www.pleasegiveblood.org](http://www.pleasegiveblood.org)

## **Heat Wave Hinders Blood Donations Poor Donor Turnout and Blood Drive Cancellations Result in Blood Collection Shortfall of Nearly 1,000 Units**

Philadelphia, PA: With the temperature in the high 90's and hitting the one-hundred degree mark over the past several days, many blood drives were forced to close and donors cancelled their scheduled donations resulting in a collection shortfall of nearly 1,000 units of blood. In order to maintain adequate supplies of blood in the community, the American Red Cross must collect on average 1,200 units of blood per day. Factors such as an excessive heat wave severely affect the ability to meet these blood collection targets. The blood supply is a community resource; a resource that solely relies on volunteer donors in our community. The American Red Cross is asking the public in the state of New Jersey and Southeastern Pennsylvania to schedule and keep their blood donation appointments.

"The heat has had a negative impact on blood collections and so far this week, we have had a lower blood donor turnout resulting in a shortfall of approximately 1,000 blood donations. Many people don't realize that there are hospital patients waiting for blood transfusions," says Brigid O'Neill-LaGier, Chief Executive Officer, American Red Cross, Penn-Jersey Blood Services Region. "If you have a blood donation appointment, please honor your appointment and donate blood. If you cancelled your appointment, please re-schedule as soon as possible by calling 1-800-GIVE-LIFE or visit [www.pleasegiveblood.org](http://www.pleasegiveblood.org). There are many patients in need in our community."

In addition to donors canceling their appointments, many area blood drives have closed early or been postponed due to the heat wave. "Unfortunately, emergencies, surgeries, and other health issues do not go away during a heat wave. I am personally asking people in our community to call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE or to visit [www.pleasegiveblood.org](http://www.pleasegiveblood.org) to find a blood drive or donor center to schedule an appointment as soon as possible," said LaGier.

Most healthy people who are at least 17 years old and weigh 110 pounds or more are eligible to donate whole blood every 56 days. In January of 2008 a law went into effect in the state of Pennsylvania that allows 16-year-old donors to donate blood with parental or legal guardian written consent.

**THIS IS AN URGENT CALL FOR BLOOD DONATIONS.** The American Red Cross urges anyone 17 years of age or older, weighing 110 pounds or more, and feeling in good health to make an appointment and donate now.

**To schedule your appointment to donate blood, please call 1-800-GIVE LIFE (1-800-448-3543) or visit [www.pleasegiveblood.org](http://www.pleasegiveblood.org) for a complete listing of blood drives and community donors centers in southeastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey.**

###

**The need is constant.  
The gratification is instant.  
Give blood.**

**1-800-GIVE LIFE**

**[www.pleasegiveblood.org](http://www.pleasegiveblood.org)**