



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs  
EMPOWERING OUR NATIONS



# MEDIA RELEASE

## First Nations and Canadian Red Cross collaborating to ensure more than 5,700 evacuees receive emergency services

(WINNIPEG, Oct. 15, 2019) – First Nation Chiefs and Councils, the Interlake Reserves Tribal Council (IRTC), the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), the Southern Chiefs Organization (SCO), Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Regional Chief Hart, and the Canadian Red Cross are working together to ensure all of the individuals evacuated from up to 13 First Nations in Manitoba, due to the recent power outage and State of Emergency, are receiving the assistance they require.

As of 9 a.m. today, the Canadian Red Cross team had registered more than 5,700 individuals who were evacuated from their home communities due to the power outage that was a result of last week's major snowstorm. Some of these communities have been without power for 96 hours (four days) or more. Both the leadership of the IRTC and the Province of Manitoba have declared a State of Emergency due to the hydro outages and limited road access.

About 120 evacuees stayed overnight at the RBC Convention Centre shelter while the remainder were lodged in hotels or in private accommodations in Winnipeg and throughout southern Manitoba, including Portage la Prairie, Selkirk, Dauphin, and Brandon. The RBC Convention Centre warming shelter can accommodate about 1,000 people with temporary cots and meals.

Evacuees who have not yet registered are encouraged to go to the Reception Centre at the RBC Convention Centre to be registered by the Canadian Red Cross team. Registering ensures the people still impacted by the storm can get the support they need.

Support will continue to be provided for the people affected by the power outage for as long as necessary. The response is part of an agreement between the Canadian Red Cross and the federal government to provide disaster assistance to First Nations in Manitoba.

Chief Cornell McLean of Lake Manitoba First Nation said, "Interlake Reserves Tribal Council and its' staff are working very hard in this emergency management situation. Our heartfelt prayers to all of those affected. We have been working 12-16 hour shifts to ensure our community members are housed in proper lodging requirements. We ask everyone to be patient during these times.

In some situations, we have hotels that only were available for 2-3 nights and we are looking at alternative hotel arrangements for those needing them. Red Cross is now taking in the new lodging



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requirements, with priorities focused on people with medical conditions, the elderly, and parents with children.”

Chief McLean goes on to say: “Our communities have been told that by October 20, 2019, Hydro should be back on. I have to comment that IRTC and Red Cross have been working well together to address our emergency needs. While there is no perfect solution, we have been working around the clock non-stop to ensure our people are taken care of. We continue to look at solutions in this situation so that proper care is administered.”

Red Cross, IRTC and other First Nation organizations continue to collaborate and work together for solutions in these trying times.

All organizations are working to ensure evacuees receive the medical services they are requiring and ensuring families have adequate food, water, and supplies, such as diapers and hygiene products. Recreation activities are being provided: at the RBC Convention Centre by Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre; the University of Winnipeg large soccer gymnasium; Eagle Urban Transition Centre is facilitating a kids’ swim field trip; MFNERC has provided 50 movie passes; and Bear Clan is supplying snacks, food, and clothing.

Donations of items such as clothing for evacuees are being accepted by the Bear Clan Patrol. Please take donations to the Bear Clan Den at 584 Selkirk Ave. in Winnipeg, MB.

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**For more information please contact:**

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