

# NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

## Small Businesses Receive Second Phase of Financial Assistance after the Alberta Wildfires

**Fort McMurray, Alta., Feb. 22, 2017** – More than 1,600 eligible small businesses are receiving financial assistance after the second phase of the Canadian Red Cross *Support to Small Business Program*.

Thanks to the generosity of Canadians, the Red Cross committed \$30 million, including matching funds of \$15 million from the Government of Alberta, to the *Support to Small Business Program*. The program, which has now completed the second of three phases, provides financial relief for small business owners, tradespeople and sole proprietors who have suffered uninsured, financial loss as a result of the 2016 Alberta fires.

“Small businesses are an essential part of a community’s heart and soul, and are vital for recovery after a disaster. By providing employment and offering services, the presence of small businesses helps to restore normalcy and a sense of togetherness. Thanks to the generosity of Canadians, the Red Cross is able to provide this unprecedented level of support to small businesses in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.”

- Jenn McManus, Canadian Red Cross Vice President, Alberta and Northwest Territories

“In the face of one of our country's worst natural disasters, Fort McMurray businesses have shown incredible resilience, taking the lead in rebuilding their city. So many Albertans and Canadians want to help them get back on their feet, and we are proud to be a part of making that happen.”

- Deron Bilous, Minister of Economic Development and Trade

During the first phase of the Red Cross *Support to Small Business Program*, 3,296 small business owners received emergency financial assistance after the Alberta fires.

The program’s second phase is now providing more than 1,600 eligible small businesses with financial assistance up to \$8,000 for fixed and new expenses resulting from business operations interrupted by the wildfires. The amount of financial assistance provided is determined by the information submitted through the application process.

Small businesses that are eligible for the second phase of funding are automatically assessed for the third funding phase, which began in January. This phase will provide small businesses with financial assistance *up to* \$11,000. The amount of financial assistance provided will be determined based upon the information submitted in the application process and accompanying supporting documentation. The program application process concluded on Jan. 31, 2017.

To date, a total of \$17.6 million has been expended for the *Support to Small Business Program*.

More details on the Red Cross *Support to Small Business Program* are available at [redcross.ca/albertafiresbusiness/](http://redcross.ca/albertafiresbusiness/).

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