



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 11, 2008

**For Further Information Contact:**

J.B. Gaskins

Vice President, Donor Systems

Cell) 727-656-8441

**LOCAL BLOOD DONATIONS AID IN DISASTER RELIEF  
FBS Ships Blood To Help Heal Injured Workers**

(St. Petersburg, FL: 2/11/2008) Florida Blood Services (FBS) was called upon over the weekend to ship 10 units of O negative trauma blood to help patients injured in the sugar factory explosion near Savannah, Georgia. "They told us that over 100 people were injured with 30 of them going to a burn center there," said JB Gaskins, FBS Vice President. "Even with our inventory at critical levels for types O negative, B negative and A negative blood we wanted to help do our part. When the crash on I-4 occurred in January other community's responded by sending us trauma blood to meet local needs. It is only right that we help others when tragedy strikes," said Gaskins.

"Blood is both a local and a national resource and it must be available when man made or natural disasters occur," said Don Doddridge, FBS Chief Executive Officer. "When the tornadoes struck in Memphis last week the Blood Center there asked us for platelets. They did not need them for people injured by the storms, but for patients already in their hospitals because their local donors were not able to give during the bad weather. This is why homeland security guidelines call for a 5-7 day blood supply to be available at all times. When tragedy strikes first responders need an adequate blood supply," said Doddridge.

"With our local inventory of types O, A and B negative blood at a one day or less reserve, we need healthy donors to give blood as soon as possible so we can meet the ongoing demand and build up a safety margin," said JB Gaskins, FBS Vice President. "All blood types are needed to help patients wherever they are," said Gaskins.

Generally, healthy people age 16 or older, weighing at least 110 pounds can donate blood. Additional eligibility questions as well as donation locations throughout Tampa Bay can be found by calling 1-800-68BLOOD (25663) or by clicking on [www.fbsblood.org](http://www.fbsblood.org).

"Here in Tampa Bay our population grows daily and with the arrival of our winter visitors, the blood needs of our community are greater than at any other time of the year," said Julie Herman, FBS Director of Marketing. "Blood usage by local patients is outpacing donations at this time of year. With the onset of the flu and cold season affecting some of our regular donors, we need more people to share their good health by giving blood."

Florida Blood Services provides for the blood needs of patients at 38 hospitals in Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco and Pinellas counties through the participation of volunteer blood donors. Over 750 donations are required daily due to the high quality of medical care in Tampa Bay that serves the most critically ill patients throughout west central Florida.