



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Julia Donaldson | Development Director

Direct: 612-302-3400 | donaldsonj@puc-mn.org

**PILLSBURY UNITED COMMUNITIES RALLIES AFTER DEVASTATING
TORNADO RIPS THROUGH NORTH MINNEAPOLIS**

(May 23, 2011) Minneapolis, MN – A tornado ripped through the streets of north Minneapolis on Sunday afternoon, damaging homes and businesses. Pillsbury United Communities (PUC), a Minneapolis-based nonprofit organization working to create choice, change and connection for over 40,000 Minneapolis residents annually, was also directly impacted by the storm.

Yet first and foremost, the families in north Minneapolis have been devastated. In response, PUC has extended its hours at the Oak Park Neighborhood Center located at 1701 Oak Park Ave N in north Minneapolis to 9pm until further notice. Oak Park has meeting rooms available for people to meet with insurance adjusters and other contractors, and phones, fax, computers, and a copier are available for use. Throughout Monday, Oak Park has had a steady stream of people coming in to use electricity to plug in cell phones, laptops, and other electronics. Oak Park and PUC is also a resource and referral center and are getting numerous phone calls.

With multiple locations in Minneapolis' inner city neighborhoods – one PUC facility located at 1200 37th Ave N was hit by the tornado. Damage at the Camden facility ranges from broken windows to roof, water, and additional damages, causing PUC to cancel programs, and relocate their programmatic and executive staff to the Oak Park Center located in north Minneapolis.

PUC staff often live in the neighborhoods they serve; one staff member affected by the storm is PUC President, Chanda Smith Baker, a life-long resident of north Minneapolis. All staff and residents impacted by the storm are safe, and many are volunteering their time to help cleanup from the aftermath.

Oak Park Center, located at 1701 Oak Park Ave N, is extending their hours until 9:00PM to help the community and its residents recover from the devastating storm. Coolers, ice, meeting rooms, a copier, fax, and transportation is available. For more information or to make a tax-deductible donation to assist in the recovery efforts, call 612-377-7000 or visit www.puc-mn.org.

About Pillsbury United Communities

Pillsbury United Communities is a nonprofit organization working to create choice, change and connection for people from all walks of life. With multiple locations in Minneapolis' inner city neighborhoods – including four neighborhood centers, a professional live theatre, and a learning Institute – Pillsbury United Communities is positioned to address the complicated issues and concerns faced by the more than 37,000 people who walk through our doors each year.

###