



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: LOU KEELS
DIRECT: 713-533-4973
CELL: 832-483-6202

Meals on Wheels Truck Stolen; 85 Seniors May Go Hungry Today

This morning's theft of a Meals on Wheels Delivery Truck comes as a surprise to program administrators who are left scrambling to bring a meal to 85 seniors

(February 19, 2007 Houston, TX) Meals on Wheels truck #7 was stolen from Northwood Villas Apartments in the 5,000 block of Aldine Mail Route near the Eastex Freeway. We are asking the community to be on the lookout for truck #7 and please contact law officials if they have any information. The truck is white with large black letters displaying the Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston and Meals on Wheels names. The #7 is located high on the middle back of the truck and on the front of the box. **This truck's license plate # is 72JGD2.**

There are currently eight Meals on Wheels trucks on city streets today; however one, truck #7, was stolen as a delivery driver delivered a meal to a senior in their home. "We are very frustrated by this incident." David Roberts, IM Director of Senior Nutrition, "We try every day to bring a nutritious meal to seniors who need them; events like this distract time, focus, and money away from that goal." The Meals on Wheels Delivery Truck was stolen this morning at 8:30 am, about 90 minutes into the route of over 100 seniors, the truck contained meals for 85 seniors. This heinous event has forced Meals on Wheels officials to deliver shelf stable items, items reserved for hurricanes and floods, to seniors instead of the hot meal they were counting on.

If not recovered, this struggling community service will suffer a financial blow of approximately \$35,000 not including the meals that were in the truck. This comes at a terrible time as waiting list for the program are at an all time high, more than 1,000 seniors are being asked to wait 6 months or more to receive a meal.

Meals on Wheels for Greater Houston delivers nutritious, noontime meals to more than 3300 seniors, five days a week, 52 weeks a year. All Meals on Wheels seniors have mobility issues that limit their ability to stand at a stove or shop for themselves. Meals on Wheels is a program for mobility challenged or homebound seniors and does not have an income requirement, however, 53% of Meals on Wheels for Greater Houston clients live at or below the poverty line.

Recent fundraising efforts have allowed this program to expand services; the current wait list, which topped 900 in March, 2006 was reduced to 487 in November, though that number has skyrocketed back to over 1,000. Additionally, breakfast and weekend meals have been made available to more than 100 seniors who have no other form of nutritional support and solely rely on Meals on Wheels for Greater Houston.

Meals on Wheels strives to provide services to any Houston area senior who needs one; thereby alleviating senior hunger in Houston. Meals on Wheels relies on area business, organizations, and individuals to support and sustain the program. The program's cost to supply a meal for one senior for one year is approximately \$1200, or \$5 per day. Anyone interested in learning more about volunteering, making a donation, or referring a friend or family member who could benefit from home-delivered meals should call (713)533.4900 or visit www.houstonmealsonwheels.org.

Editor's Note: Lou Keels, 713.533.4973, 832.483.6202 or lkeels@imgh.org is available for comment at Interfaith Ministries Offices, 3217 Montrose Blvd., Houston, TX 77006

-END-