

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Eleventh annual Wheels for Warmth adds sale, breaks records

Montpelier, VT – Vermont’s “Wheels for Warmth” broke all records in its 11th year, thanks in large part to its additional location in Rutland County. Final numbers for 2015 show the program collected a total of **\$55,801** for emergency fuel assistance programs, sold **2,200** safe tires, and recycled **3,775** donated, unusable tires.

This year, in addition to the traditional collection and sale location at Dubois Construction in Montpelier, collections and sales also took place at Casella Construction in Mendon, with the aim of better serving people in the Central/Southern Vermont region. The Mendon sale was made possible in large part by local support in that community from new sponsor VSECU, a credit union for everybody in Vermont.

"It's great being able to play a part in growing an event that has so many beneficiaries," said John Casella, II of Casella Construction. "From the family getting help with their heating bill to the single mom putting a safe set of tires on her car, this event has a lot of winners, and we're already looking forward to next year."

Proceeds from both sales benefit heating assistance programs at community action agencies around the state, such as Capstone, BROCC, CVOEO, and NEKCA.

"This event is an enormous volunteer effort, but it isn't until you see the Saturday sale with your own eyes that you really understand just how much of an impact 'Wheels for Warmth' has," said Dan Hoxworth, Executive Director of Capstone Community Action. "Hundreds of people come looking for affordable tires and are so grateful for any assistance. It's heartwarming to see, and thanks to those sales and the generous tire donations from Vermonters, we're going to be able to help more neighbors in need this winter. Overall, 'Wheels for Warmth' is a win for Vermont's environment, drivers, families and communities."

"We are so pleased with the warm welcome the Rutland community gave 'Wheels for Warmth,'" said Carol Flint, Executive Director of BROCC. "The proceeds from the sale will be immediately put to good use locally to help people stay warm this year through fuel and electric assistance. We've already heard from people and businesses across the region about how they can get involved next year."

Since Phil Scott established the program in 2005, “Wheels for Warmth” has raised **\$309,190** for emergency fuel assistance, put back into use **14,700** safe, donated tires, and recycled more than **25,054** tires.

Tires were collected at Bond Auto and Vianor Tire locations around Vermont as well as Sen. Dick Mazza's Store in Colchester, Village Grocery in Waitsfield and Percy Park in Stowe. Also new in 2015, everyone who donated usable tires, or recycled unsafe tires received a ticket entering them in a raffle for a brand new set of automobile tires from Vianor Tire and Pete's Tire Barn. Winning numbers can be found on the "Wheels for Warmth" website and Facebook page.

All donated tires were inspected by Department of Motor Vehicle officers, and those deemed safe were sold for a maximum of \$25 each on Oct. 31. Tires not meeting standards were recycled through Casella Waste Management. Casella donates 100 percent of the \$4 recycling fee to home heating programs.

"One of the best parts of being in our line of business is that it gives us the opportunity to help others," said Mike Casella of Casella Waste Systems. "We have the team and the tools to safely recycle thousands of donated tires, and we're happy to donate our time and resources, knowing the money is all going to keep Vermonters warm and keep tires out of our waste stream."

"Every year, new people join the 'Wheels for Warmth' team, and it's been amazing to see this crew of Vermonters come together with the common goal of helping our neighbors and our environment," said Lt. Governor Phil Scott. "I'm thankful to all of the volunteers for their tireless work, to the sponsors for their support and generosity, and to the people who both donate and buy tires; none of this would be possible without you."

"Wheels for Warmth" would not be nearly as successful without the generosity of: Casella Waste Systems, Bond Auto, Vianor Tire, WDEV/Radio Vermont Group, VSECU (Vermont State Employees Credit Union), Jet Service Envelope, Associated General Contractors, Dubois Construction, Casella Construction, Inc., Troy Kingsbury and the Village Grocery in Waitsfield, Dick Mazza's Store, Maplewood LTD, OMYA, Pete's Tire, Accura Printing, Capitol Grounds, Booth Brothers Dairy, McGullicuddy's Irish Pub, Freihofer's Bakery, Best Western Inn and Suites, Vermont Department of Motor Vehicles, ADA Traffic Control, and WorkSafe. With their help, all costs associated with promoting and implementing "Wheels for Warmth" are covered without using program funds.

Learn more at www.wheelsforwarmth.org.

MEDIA NOTE: Photos attached. Please reply to this email if you would like high-res versions.

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