

HOUSEWARMING DRIVE TO HELP RISING NUMBER OF PEOPLE AND FAMILIES WITH BASIC HOUSING NEEDS ACROSS LOWER MAINLAND

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June 2, 2009, Vancouver – The HomeStart Foundation, a front line agency that provides furniture to people who have been homeless, and Vancouver-based 1-800-Rid-Of-It junk removal, announced today they are partnering to furnish three to five homes for those most in need in Vancouver during a time when the economy and ongoing lack of affordable housing are translating into heightened demand, especially from families with children.

“Once people are housed, the question is do they buy a used easy chair or groceries and continue sleeping on their clothes?” says Vikki Stevenson, executive director of HomeStart, which works with 81 agencies across the Lower Mainland, including the Salvation Army and Union Gospel Mission, to provide basic furnishings. “We know demand is up. Times are definitely worse, which is why we’ve made this appeal.”

She said there has been a twenty five per cent increase between April 2008 and April 2009 in the number of people inquiring into housing. In the first four months of 2009, HomeStart provided more than \$30,500 worth of furniture to people in need (based on thrift store pricing), a 20 per cent increase over the same time last year.

The partnership’s “Housewarming Drive” – to become an annual event - is appealing to the Vancouver community to donate unwanted furniture that will be picked up by 1-800-Rid-Of-It Junk Removal free of charge this coming Friday and Saturday, June 5th and 6th. Items that are most helpful are kitchen sets, sofas/easy chairs (these can double as beds) and dressers, all gently used or in excellent quality.

“We know from pick-ups and talking with customers that there are loads of old dressers and chairs collecting dust. It’s time to give them a better use,” said Mike McKee, president of 1-800-Rid-Of-It Junk Removal.

He said people can call 1-800-Rid-Of-It Junk Removal and a team will arrive to pick-up the used furniture on either Friday or Saturday.

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For more information, please contact:

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