



Contact

For Immediate Release

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## **Boy Scout Helps Elderly with Smoke Alarms**

14 year old Buck John of Jefferson, Texas wanted to earn his Eagle Scout award and at the same time, do something good for his community. His letter to Texas State Fire Marshal Paul Maldonado may help him accomplish both.

Buck's goal is to install smoke alarms in the homes of every Meals on Wheels client in Marion County. His letter to the State Fire Marshal said many of the people served meals are elderly and disabled and most are unable to own or install smoke detectors. His letter also indicated that many of the residents in this small northeast Texas county use wood stoves or space heaters, which can be dangerous.

Buck's letter was forwarded to the Insurance Council of Texas (ICT) which works closely with the State Fire Marshal's Office in a smoke alarm program called, "We're Out to Alarm Texas." The program has donated thousands of smoke alarms to fire departments through out the state in the hopes of saving lives and property.

"This young man had done his homework in asking for smoke alarm donations from local businesses, civic organizations and volunteer firefighters in Marion County," said Mark Hanna, a spokesman for the Insurance Council of Texas. "Once we received his letter, we told him he had our support."

All 240 Meals on Wheels patients in Marion County have been asked if they would like a free smoke alarm in their home. A county-wide installation will begin Saturday, March 8.

Judy Burson who works with the Meals on Wheels program in Jefferson was worried that Buck wasn't aware of how many homes he might be dealing with. "I didn't think he had realized how many Meals on Wheels clients there were in Marion County," said Burson. "When I told him there were more than 200, he just said that's okay."

On Monday, March 3, Buck was presented approximately 200 smoke alarms to fulfill his request to equip every Meals on Wheels client with an alarm. Representatives from Walmart, Meals on Wheels, the Boy Scouts, the State Fire Marshal's Office, the Insurance Council of Texas, the mayor of Jefferson and the Marion County fire marshal were on hand during a brief ceremony on the front steps of Jefferson City Hall.

Scout Master Walt Underwood said Buck is one of eight young men in Troop 555 who hope to receive their Eagle Scout award this year. “The Eagle Scout projects include a shoe drive, recording children’s books and placing a lighted flag pole at a children’s playground,” Underwood said. “Buck’s project is tremendous and he deserves all of the credit for the work he has put into it.”

The Eagle Scout award is the highest rank in scouting and it requires leading a successful community service project.

Buck said this project was important to him because his grandmother had been a Meals on Wheels client and his great uncle was currently a client. Buck said, “I believe that if this project saves one life, it is worth it.”

The Insurance Council of Texas is the largest state insurance trade association in the country consisting of more than 500 property and casualty insurers writing business in Texas. For more information turn to ICT’s Web site at [www.insurancecouncil.org](http://www.insurancecouncil.org).

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