



DRAFT RELEASE  
July 20, 2005

Contact: Rich Johnson, 817-410-1515  
[rjohnson@incitusgroup.com](mailto:rjohnson@incitusgroup.com)

### **Mesquite to throw out Street Spam from streets, utility poles**

MESQUITE, TX (July 20, 2005) – After collecting some 18,000 unauthorized advertising signs posted on utility poles and along streets and intersections in 2004 and another 23,000 signs just since January, City of Mesquite officials have launched Throw Out Street Spam (TOSS) to enlist community support in curbing what is widely termed Street Spam.

The City, which typically annually budgets several thousand dollars in overtime to remove the illegal signs, hopes to entice Mesquite's civic clubs, nonprofits and church and community groups to register for up to three, two-week periods each year during which they would have exclusive rights to collect the signs and be paid 25 cents each.

"Groups that sign up for TOSS will likely do so from a community pride standpoint," said Carol Zolnerowich, City of Mesquite Deputy City Manager. "It should be very gratifying to have such an immediate impact on the appearance and beauty of our community."

Zolnerowich believes the groups will stay busy as long as there are companies that will pay people to post illegal signs to advertise the opportunity to "earn six-figure salaries working from home," or to "lose 30 lbs. in 30 days," and other similar messages.

"On the other hand, TOSS might deter companies from spending so much money to post signs in Mesquite," said Zolnerowich. "But they would surely ramp back up if TOSS ever backed off."

Richard Gertson, City of Mesquite director of community development, recently participated in a North Texas Central of Governments multi-month program to develop best practices for code enforcement and he said every city acknowledged that they had problems with Street Spam.

Gertson said Street Spam is particularly concentrated along major thoroughfares and significant intersections, including those involving LBJ Freeway and Town East Boulevard. He said the illegal signs also crop up on private property, road networks within shopping centers and other major destination centers.

**-- MORE --**

**Mesquite to throw out Street Spam  
add two**

Administered by Keep Mesquite Beautiful, TOSS participants will need to register with the city through a recognized group, wear safety vests, and receive a safety orientation. Participants must be at least 12 years old and have adult supervision. The City will exclude certain streets or intersections from the program if a particular area is deemed too dangerous for pedestrians.

“We do not consider signs about lost dogs and cats, or garage-sale signs to be Street Spam, and those signs will be exempted from the program,” said Gertson.

Two Mesquite based pilot groups, including 30 children and adults with the First Presbyterian Church Pathfinders and 38 children and adults from Troop 103 of the Boy Scouts of America, participated in TOSS for one week each in May. Combined, they collected several hundred signs.

Other groups are expected to begin participating as early as August.

Groups interested in registering to participate in TOSS should contact Keep Mesquite Beautiful Executive Director Chesley House at 972-288-7730 or [chouse@ci.mesquite.tx.us](mailto:chouse@ci.mesquite.tx.us).

**-- END --**