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## ***San Diego residents asked to take food donations to any Albertsons or Vons locations Nov. 30 – Dec. 5***

**San Diego** – More than 475,000 people in San Diego County are impacted by hunger, including 138,300 children. To combat this problem, the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), North County Transit District (NCTD), Albertsons/Vons and the Girl Scouts are teaming up with the San Diego Food Bank for the 8th Annual Stuff the Bus Food Drive.

San Diego residents are being asked to make canned-food donations at any of the 69 San Diego County Albertsons or Vons locations from Monday, Nov. 30 – Saturday, Dec. 5. In a final donation push, on Saturday, December 5, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., more than 750 Girl Scouts will be at these stores encouraging residents to help Stuff the Bus!

Stuff the Bus organizers are challenging San Diego residents to break last year's record of 23,000 pounds of donated food for families during the holiday season. All food donations will go directly to the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank, which will then be distributed to local organizations that help the hungry.

"MTS launched the Stuff the Bus food drive eight years ago not only to collect food for families in need, but to help raise community awareness about the issue of hunger in San Diego," said Paul Jablonski, chief executive officer of MTS. "This is a great partnership for a great cause and we are confident the community will step up to the challenge."

"We are proud to be part of a food drive tackling this important issue," said Lori Raya, president for Albertsons, Vons and Pavilions. "Stuff the Bus barrels will be prominently located in all Albertsons and Vons locations in San Diego for the week leading up to December 5, and we look forward to seeing them filled throughout the week."

Donating is easy. Donors can pick up a shopping list of the most important non-perishable foods needed at any Albertsons. And, as a new and convenient option this year, Vons will have pre-packaged "hunger bags" with non-perishable food available for shoppers to purchase for \$7 and donate on scene.

"The holiday season will be extremely difficult for families in need in our community," said James A. Floros, president & CEO of the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank. "Thanks to the committed staff members and volunteers at MTS, NCTD, Albertsons and the Girl Scouts, this year's Stuff the Bus Food Drive will help the Food Bank meet the increased need for food assistance we experience over the holiday season. Last year, our organization provided more than 18.3 million meals to San Diego families in need. We're very grateful to our food drive partners and the community for helping us feed the hungry this holiday season."

"Many families face hunger and food insecurity throughout the year in San Diego County," said Matt Tucker, executive director, North County Transit District. "The annual Stuff the Bus campaign is a wonderful opportunity for North County residents to donate food that will certainly brighten the holiday season for our neighbors in need."

An MTS or NCTD bus, along with Girl Scout representatives, will be on-site at the following 15 Albertsons locations Saturday, December 5 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

- Carlsbad Vons (6951 El Camino Real)
- Clairemont Vons (5555 Balboa Avenue)
- Chula Vista Albertsons (720 Third Avenue)
- El Cajon Vons (1201 Avocado)
- Escondido Albertsons (1509 East Valley Parkway)
- Lemon Grove Albertsons (7090 Broadway)
- Mira Mesa Vons (8310 Mira Mesa Boulevard)
- Oceanside Albertsons (3450 Marron Road)
- Oceanside Albertsons (3925 Mission Avenue)
- Rancho Bernardo Vons (11986 Bernardo Plaza Drive)
- San Carlos Albertsons (8650 Lake Murray Boulevard)
- San Marcos Albertsons (1572 San Elijo Road South)
- Santee Vons (9870 Magnolia Avenue)
- Spring Valley Albertsons (543 Sweetwater Road)
- University City Vons (7788 Regents Road)

"Service is at the heart of Girl Scouting," said Jo Dee C. Jacob, CEO of Girl Scouts San Diego. "As they collect food in their schools and neighborhoods and assist at the stores, Girl Scouts will put into action their pledge to make the world a better place."

When the food drive ends at 2 p.m., the buses will caravan to the Food Bank, where military volunteers from the Armed Services YMCA will help unload each bus. For additional Stuff the Bus information, including a list of most needed grocery items, visit the MTS website at [sdmts.com](http://sdmts.com) or the NCTD website at [gonctd.com](http://gonctd.com).

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