

## Donate old cell phone today

Written by Kara Beach  
Monday, 01 October 2012 13:16

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*Donated cell phones to be wiped clean; proceeds support domestic violence victims*

SPRINGFIELD – October 1, 2012. Marking the beginning of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Lt. Governor Sheila Simon launched her annual cell phone drive today. For each phone donated during the drive, Verizon Wireless will contribute \$10 to the Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence (ICADV), up to \$10,000.

In many instances a survivor may arrive at a shelter with no access to a phone to contact other loved ones, or will not use their current phone as it might be kept under the abuser's name.

Collected phones will be donated to Verizon's HopeLine program. Phones will be refurbished and sold, with the proceeds going to support local domestic violence shelters and programs. The program also provides domestic violence agencies with wireless phones and airtime for use by domestic violence victims. If a phone can't be refurbished, it will be recycled in an environmentally sound way.

"We have a chance to partner with private and non-profit groups to directly impact the lives of our neighbors," said Simon, a former Jackson county prosecutor and founder of a domestic violence legal clinic at Southern Illinois University School of Law. "These phones could be a lifeline for domestic violence survivors, and the matching funds will help support response and prevention statewide."

Thanks to the generous support of individuals, private entities and state agencies, Simon received more than 1,000 cell phones during her donation drive last year. Through matching funds from Verizon, the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network and ICADV each received a \$5,000 donation.

The \$10 matching donation this year will fund further growth and expansion of ICADV's Virtual Legal Clinic consultation program launched by Simon and her staff. The Virtual Legal Clinics connect domestic violence survivors in underserved areas with an attorney concentrating in family law for a free legal consultation.

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“On behalf of ICADV, I am very grateful to Lt. Governor Simon for her emphasis on this very important project,” said Vickie Smith, ICADV Executive Director. “Not only does it bring in funds for expanding the Virtual Legal Clinic, each phone will in turn help another domestic violence victim reach life-saving assistance when needed.”

Since its recycling program was launched in 2001, HopeLine has collected more than 9 million wireless phones and has awarded more than \$14.2 million in cash grants to domestic violence organizations throughout the country. More than 123,000 HopeLine phones with the equivalent of more than 406 million minutes of airtime have been provided to victims, survivors and domestic violence organizations since the program’s inception.

“Verizon Wireless is committed to supporting those affected by domestic violence,” said T.J. Fox, Verizon Wireless region president. “We recognize the role we can play in helping organizations right here in Illinois work to put an end to this destructive force and to provide assistance to victims of domestic abuse.”

Cell phones can be donated through October 12 at the following locations. Donations are also accepted year-round at Verizon Wireless stores:

- Lt. Governor’s Chicago office – James R. Thompson Center 15th floor
  
- Lt. Governor’s Springfield office – 214 State Capitol
  
- Lt. Governor’s Carbondale office – IDOT Facility, 2801 W. Murphysboro Rd.
  
- Chicago Bar Association bookstore – 321 S. Plymouth Ct., Chicago

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- Illinois State Bar Association – 424 S. Second St., Springfield