

Claimant Held On To \$175,000 *Mega Millions*™ Ticket For Two Months, Finally Collects



Winner James Wesson, winner of a \$175,000 Mega Millions prize from the drawing the Friday after Thanksgiving.

(Austin, January 27) - James Wesson doesn't let things hurry him up too much now that he's retired, not even a \$175,000 *Mega Millions*™ ticket that matched five of the six numbers drawn for the drawing the Friday after Thanksgiving.

"I remember sitting in my living and looking at my ticket, and then at the numbers in the *Houston Chronicle*," Wesson said. "Then, as I saw I had five of the six numbers, I just got kind of weak all over. It was very thrilling. Sharlene and I just couldn't believe it."

Texas Lottery Commission Executive Director Reagan E. Greer says Wesson's reaction is the all-too-familiar response of the player who just won a big prize.

"Only a handful of the winners I've been privileged to meet ever thought, at first glance, that they'd won," said Greer. "It's almost too much to wrap your mind around in those

first few seconds when you realize the numbers on your ticket match the numbers on TV or in the paper. And then, like Mr. Wesson did, players almost always turn to jell-o once they get it that they've won, and it's the best feeling in the world, too."

Wesson says the \$175,000 will help him accomplish two things quickly.

"I'm going to pay off the mortgage on the house and then buy a pick-up," he said. "I'm also going to buy my wife something real nice. I don't know what it is yet, but Sharlene is going to like it. We're also going to have dinner at a great restaurant in Houston."

The retired employee of an aluminum smelter kept the ticket for nearly two months in his wallet.

Wesson bought the ticket at the Timewise #4901, 9641 Cypresswood Drive in Houston.

Tonight's *Texas Two Step*® drawing is worth \$250,000. Friday's *Mega Millions* jackpot is \$18 million. Saturday's *Lotto Texas*® jackpot begins anew at an estimated \$4 million.

For more information about the Texas Lottery®, please visit the official Texas Lottery Commission Web site at <http://www.txlottery.org>

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