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**2010 HOT-CHECK WARRANT AMNESTY PERIOD AND ROUNDUP
ANNOUNCED**

Arrest roundups to follow publication of the names

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal and Sgt. Raymond Hernández from the El Paso County Sheriff's Office today announced that they will be joined by area Constables, Military Police Officers from Fort Bliss and deputies of the Texas Department of Public Safety in conducting a roundup of individuals with outstanding hot check warrants in El Paso County.

This unparalleled cooperative effort by local law enforcement to arrest hot check writers will be preceded by an amnesty period in which residents can pay their outstanding amounts without fear of being arrested.

The amnesty period runs from Friday May 14 through Monday June 7, 2010. Beginning Monday 31, 2010 the County Attorney's Office will publish on the El Paso County's web-site and on the web-sites of several local media outlets, the names and addresses of thousands of individuals with outstanding hot-check warrants.

Individuals who want to avoid the publication of their names must pay their outstanding balances by Friday May 28, 2010.

Individuals who pay their outstanding balances before Monday June 7, 2010, the end of the amnesty period, will avoid arrests during the upcoming county-wide arrest warrant round-up. Additionally, they will also avoid the payment of additional fees, such as court costs, attorney fees, and the cost of posting a bond.

Residents with outstanding hot check warrants can make their payments in person at the following locations:

- **El Paso County Courthouse**
500 E. San Antonio, room 503 (5th floor)
Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m
- **El Paso County Ysleta Annex**
9521 Socorro Rd., Suite A-3
Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m

Forms of payment accepted include most credit cards, money orders, cashiers checks, and cash, however those paying cash will have to bring the exact amount (cashiers can't give change).

In addition, residents can make payments online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through "Hot Check E-pay," by visiting the El Paso County Attorney's Office web-page at www.epcounty.com/CA

For more information regarding hot check payments and balances please contact the El Paso County Attorney's Office Hot Check Unit at 546-2051 or visit the El Paso County Attorney's Office web site at: www.epcounty.com/CA.

There are currently more than 3,600 names in the County's hot checks warrants list who owe local merchants more than \$3.34 million dollars. During last fiscal year (2008-2009) the Hot Check Unit collected 1.23 million dollars in outstanding hot checks. So far, during the first 7 months of fiscal year 2009-2010, the County Attorney's Office has collected over \$620,000.

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal is encouraging individuals with outstanding warrants for writing hot checks to take advantage of this opportunity.

"These hot check writers will be fully prosecuted for a criminal offense if they fail to pay the outstanding balances on their checks; this is their last chance." Bernal explained.

Sgt. Raymond Hernandez from the El Paso Sheriff's Office warned that, after the amnesty period, Sheriff's deputies and members of the other participating law enforcement agencies will go out in search of individuals with outstanding warrants.

"These individuals are breaking the law; they are stealing money by writing worthless checks. We are committed to find them and arrest them anywhere they might be, at home, at work or with their family members," Hernández concluded.

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