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**COUNTY ATTORNEY INVESTIGATORS LOCATE MAN ACCUSED
OF WRITING MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED HOT CHECKS**
Dozens of local merchants scammed out of thousands of dollars.

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal today announced the arrest of a Horizon City resident accused of scamming dozens of local merchants and landlords out of thousands of dollars.

Forty eight year-old Michael Nowell was arrested yesterday evening on 8 open warrants on charges that range from felony theft, theft by check, and failure to appear in court.

Up until yesterday, Nowell had been arrested twice before on charges of theft by check. On both occasions, the defendant bonded out of jail and never showed up for his court dates. Nowell was able to keep avoiding arrest by constantly moving to different residences, and in the meantime, handing out dozens of insufficient funds checks to landlords, moving service companies, furniture stores, and even a carpeting company.

According to complaints filed with police, Nowell would often wear scrubs, a stethoscope and claim he was a medical doctor to convince his victims of extending him credit or to accept his checks.

As of today's date, the County Attorney's Office has received 102 complaints of insufficient funds checks against the defendant. The checks total more than \$14,500.

The County Attorney's Office has also learned that the Pima County Attorney's Office has several open warrants against Nowell for handing out hot checks to 7 different landlords.

Michael Nowell is currently in the El Paso County jail and his bond has been set at \$36,000. The County Attorney is requesting individuals who might have additional complaints

against the defendant, to file a report as soon as possible with the El Paso Police Department or the Sheriff's Office.

“The County Attorney’s Office investigators worked vigorously during several weeks to locate and arrest Mr. Nowell. This case illustrates the level of commitment my office has to combat fraud in our community and to help local merchants who are victims of hot check writers,” El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal said.

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