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PRESS RELEASE

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**NEW PROGRAM ALLOWS LOCAL MERCHANTS TO
COLLECT FASTER FROM HOT CHECK WRITERS**

During today's annual Hot Check Seminar, El Paso County Attorney José Rodríguez unveiled today a new free service that will provide merchants with faster access to funds collected by this office from hot checks writers.

The "On-line Inquiry" program will grant registered merchants access to their hot check accounts via internet, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, allowing them to learn instantly about the latest payments received and any other activities registered under their accounts.

Under the old system, merchants had to call the County Attorney's Office to find out if any payments had been made to their account. Often the merchants would find out about collections days or weeks after a payment had been received.

With the new system, after registering on-line, the merchants get a password to access a computer program called 'tracer' that allows them to access their financial records via the internet. The merchants can verify the number and amounts of the checks submitted for collection, and can find out in real time whenever a payment has been posted to their account.

"The On-line Inquiry system not only makes it more convenient for merchants to regularly verify the status of their accounts, but also allows them for faster recovery on hot check funds collected," explained El Paso County Attorney José Rodríguez.

“We feel that by facilitating merchants with faster recovery on outstanding amounts, we are allowing them to re-invest the money back into their business, increasing the economic activity in our community”, concluded Rodríguez.