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PRESS RELEASE

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**HUNDREDS OF RESIDENTS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE
HOT CHECK AMNESTY PERIOD**

Few hours left to take advantage of the amnesty. Arrest roundups may begin immediately after

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal today revealed that more than 340 individuals have taken advantage of the hot check amnesty period since its implementation on January 28, 2011. During the first 27 days of the amnesty period the County Attorney's Office has received payment of 393 hot checks that represent more than \$107,000 for local merchants.

Bernal also reminded hot check writers with outstanding arrest warrants that the amnesty period ends tomorrow Friday February 25, 2011, at 5:00 p.m.

Individuals who take advantage of the amnesty period and pay their outstanding balances before the end of the amnesty period will avoid arrest during an upcoming countywide warrant round-up being coordinated by the County Attorney's Office with the assistance of the El Paso Sheriff's Office and Constables from Precincts 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7. Additionally, those individuals who pay by the amnesty period will also avoid additional fees such as court costs, attorney fees, and the cost of posting a bond.

A list with the names and addresses of more than 3,000 individuals with outstanding hot check warrants who owe local merchants more than 2.7 million dollars was made public on February 13, 2011 and remains posted at the El Paso County's main webpage at (<http://www.epcounty.com/>). Additionally, several local media outlets have posted the Hot Check Warrant List on their web-sites to make it easier for the public to access the information.

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

- **El Paso County Courthouse**
- **El Paso County Ysleta Annex**

500 E. San Antonio, room 503
M- F 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

9521 Socorro Rd., Suite A-3
M - F 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Forms of payment accepted include credit cards, money orders, cashier checks, and cash; however, those paying with cash will have to bring the exact amount (cashiers cannot 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.

In addition, **for the first time the County Attorney's Office will be accepting payment plans for qualifying individuals** in order to facilitate the payment of outstanding amounts.

During last fiscal year (2009-2010) the Hot Check Unit collected more than \$930,000 dollars in outstanding hot checks. So far, during the first 5 months of fiscal year 2010-2011 (October-February), the County Attorney's Office has collected over \$383,000.

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