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**NO. 201102**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**HOT-CHECK AMNESTY PERIOD EXTENDED ONE WEEK DUE  
TO SEVERE WEATHER**

**Individuals still have one week to pay and avoid publication of their names**

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal announced today that, due to the winter storm that kept the County Courthouse closed since Wednesday, the amnesty period for hot check writers has been extended until **Friday February 25, 2011**.

Individuals who take advantage of the amnesty period and pay their outstanding balances before Friday, February 25, will avoid arrest during an upcoming countywide warrant round up. Additionally, they will save money by not having to pay additional fees such as court costs, attorney fees, and the cost of posting a bond.

The extension of the amnesty period includes one more week for individuals with outstanding warrants who want to avoid the publication of their names.

On **Sunday February 13, 2011** the County Attorney's Office will make public the names and addresses of thousands of individuals with outstanding hot-check warrants. The list will be published on the County of El Paso's web site and other local media outlets. Additionally, the full list of names will be published in that Sunday's edition of Diario de El Paso.

Individuals with pending warrants who want to avoid the publication of their names must pay their outstanding balances by **Friday, February 11, 2011**.

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  
M- F 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- **El Paso County Ysleta Annex**  
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](http://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](http://www.epcounty.com/CA).

There are currently more than 3,075 names in the County's hot checks warrants list who owe local merchants more than \$2.76 million dollars. 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 4 months of fiscal year 2010-2011 (October-January), the County Attorney’s Office has collected over \$270,000.

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal is encouraging individuals with outstanding warrants for writing hot checks to take advantage of this opportunity. In order to facilitate the payment of outstanding amounts, **for the first time the County Attorney’s Office will be accepting payment plans for qualifying individuals.**

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