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**2012 HOT-CHECK WARRANT AMNESTY PERIOD AND ROUNDUP
ANNOUNCED**

Arrest roundups to follow publication of the names

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal and El Paso County Sheriff's Chief Deputy Jesus Campa today announced that they will be joined by Constables from Precincts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, in conducting a roundup of individuals with outstanding hot check warrants in El Paso County.

This cooperative effort by local law enforcement to arrest hot check writers will be preceded by the publication of the names and addresses of thousands of individuals with outstanding warrants, and an amnesty period in which residents can pay their outstanding amounts without being arrested.

The list with the names of individuals with outstanding warrants will be published on Sunday April 1, 2012 by many local media outlets and in the County's website. Individuals who want to avoid the publication of their names must pay their outstanding balances in full by Wednesday March 28, 2012.

The publication of the warrants list kicks-off a two-week amnesty period that runs from Sunday April 1st to Friday April 13, 2012.

Individuals who take advantage of the amnesty period and pay their outstanding balances before Friday, April 13, 2012, will avoid arrest during an upcoming county-wide warrant roundup. Additionally, they will not have to pay extra 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
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.

Additionally, during the amnesty period (April 1-13, 2012), residents of Northeast El Paso can make their payments in person at the following location:

- **El Paso County Attorney's Northeast Annex Office**
4641 Cohen St., Suite D
M- F 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 a.m.
(915) 858-0631

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 <https://www.epcounty.com/hotchecks/>.

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 2,700 names in the County's hot checks warrants list who owe local merchants more than \$2.13 million dollars. During last fiscal year (2010-2011) the Hot Check Unit collected more than \$905,000 in outstanding hot checks. So far, during the first 5 months of fiscal year 2011-2012 (October-February), the County Attorney's Office has collected over \$330,000.

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, County Attorney's Office will be accepting payment plans for qualifying individuals.

"For many years now, the County Attorney's Office has been supporting local businesses by collecting their insufficient funds checks at no cost. We believe the public display of the names of individuals with warrants might serve as a deterrent for hot checks writers, and will motivate some of them to come forward to pay any outstanding amounts before they face serious consequences," Bernal said.

"Hot check writers who do not seize this opportunity will be arrested and will face criminal charges," Bernal concluded.

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