



JOSÉ R. RODRÍGUEZ
EL PASO COUNTY ATTORNEY
500 EAST SAN ANTONIO
ROOM 503, COUNTY COURTHOUSE
EL PASO, TEXAS 79901

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PRESS RELEASE

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For More Information Contact:

Elhiu Dominguez

Public Affairs Officer

Phone: (915) 546-2016

Cell: (915) 472-1354

FAX: (915) 546-2133

Elhiu.dominguez@ca.epcounty.com

**DUE TO COURTHOUSE EVACUATION, HOT CHECK
AMNESTY PERIOD EXTENDED UNTIL MONDAY**

El Paso County Attorney José R. Rodríguez announced today that, due to the evacuation of the courthouse, the amnesty week for hot check writers has been extended until Monday October 13, 2008. Individuals who pay their outstanding checks by Monday at 5:00 p.m. will not have their names printed in the newspapers on Sunday October 19, 2008.

County Attorney Rodríguez made the decision to extend the amnesty period after an electric fire forced the closing of the courthouse around noon today. Shortly after the Courthouse was evacuated, the County Attorney's Office started to receive dozens of phone-calls from individuals who were not able to enter the building to make their payments and who were concerned about the publication of their names in the local newspapers.

Residents with outstanding hot check warrants can make their payments at the El Paso County Attorney's Office, 5th floor of the County Courthouse, 500 E. San Antonio. **The payment window at the County Attorney's Office will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p. m.**

In addition to avoid the publication of their names in the local newspapers, individuals who make payments during the amnesty period will save money by avoiding the payment of many fees, such as court costs, attorney fees, and the payment of bonds. **Most importantly, they will avoid incarceration during the upcoming countywide arrest warrant round up.**

Forms of payment accepted include most credit cards, money orders, cashiers checks, and cash, however those paying cash would have to bring the exact amount (cashiers can't give change).

For more information regarding hot check payments and balances please contact the El Paso County Attorney's Office Hot Check Unit at **546-2051**. The complete and updated list of individuals with theft by check outstanding warrants will remain posted in the El Paso County web site at: www.epcounty.com/CA.

At the beginning of the amnesty period there were more than 4,600 names in the County's hot checks warrants list, who owed local merchants more than 4.04 million dollars.

During fiscal year 2007-2008 the County Attorney's Hot Check Unit collected 1.4 million dollars in outstanding hot checks

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