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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**District Attorney's Office Check Division Generates More than \$1.2 Million in Revenue for Dallas County from Restitution, Fees Collected**  
*Check Division Largest Processor of Bad Checks in Dallas County*

**(DALLAS – July 27, 2007)** – The Check Division at the Dallas County District Attorney's Office recently generated more than \$1.2 million in revenue as a result of collecting restitution, fees, interest and penalties from 17 bad checks written to Dallas County by Steven Abney of American Realty Investors for tax payments on real estate properties. The \$1.2 million collected by the Dallas County District Attorney's Office Check Division is a record amount paid by one person in a 30-day period.

The total amount of restitution collected on the 17 checks was \$1,189,775.65, with an additional \$30 merchant fee, \$75 District Attorney's Office processing fee, and \$608 court fee assessed per check, for a sub-total of \$1,199,879.16. Penalties and interest for the month of June totaled \$62,150.03 for a grand total of \$1,262,029.19 collected from Mr. Abney.

"With an average of 500 checks processed per day, the Check Division at the District Attorney's Office is now the single, largest filer of criminal cases of Issuance of a Bad Check offenses than any other law enforcement agency in Dallas County," said Dallas County District Attorney Craig Watkins. "People often disregard the seriousness of writing bad checks because the offense is low level and some people are willing to take a risk of not getting caught. However, Issuance of a Bad Check is indeed a criminal offense and judging by the volume of checks we are processing on a daily basis, it is a major problem that we take very seriously. To this end, we have an incredible team in our Check Division working diligently to track down these perpetrators, enforce payment of their debts and hopefully send a message that writing hot checks in Dallas County will not be tolerated."

The offense of Issuance of a Bad Check is a Class C misdemeanor that by law must be filed in the Justice of the Peace Court, and is punishable by fine only. In addition to a perpetrator paying the amount owed on the check, defendants in these cases are also subject to additional fees, including a merchant fee, a District Attorney's Office Check Division processing fee, court costs and any applicable penalties and interest.

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**Check Division Generates Revenue**

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Dallas County previously used a third-party collection agency to handle bad checks written to the County and local merchants, until approximately two and a half years ago, when the function of collecting on bad checks was brought in-house to be processed by the Check Division at the District Attorney's Office. The Check Division is comprised of five attorneys, six investigators and two specialized Department of Public Safety fraud investigators.

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