

Fort Bend DA's hot check division offers help to merchants



Fort Bend County District Attorney John Healey, left, with the staff of worthless check division Irma Cortez, Verma Maxwell and Debbie Martinez.

RICHMOND

Fort Bend County District Attorney, John Healey, announced today that the District Attorney's Office was undertaking a new program designed to put more money into the pockets of local merchants and others victimized by hot check writers.

The District Attorney's Office through the Worthless Check Division will now collect on behalf of victimized merchants, the \$30.00 fee the law allows to be assessed hot check writers.

Aided by a new computer program developed by Fort Bend County's Information Technology Department, the DA's Office will now collect restitution for the amount of the check and merchant's fees for local merchants who file their hot checks with the Worthless Check Division.

"As the merchant fee may be assessed on each bad check written, this program should prove to be a major incentive for citizens to bring their hot check complaints to the District Attorney's Office"

stated Healey.

Anyone interested in filing the hot checks with the District Attorney's Worthless Check Division should contact Irma Cortez at (281) 341-4486. "Our Office has annually averaged between \$250,000 and \$300,000 in revenue collected for local merchants. By upgrading our collection capability we should be able to keep existing clients happy, and motivate other hot check victims to explore how the District Attorney's Office may assist them with collecting on their hot checks" Healey said.