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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday August 18, 2006

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**MONTANA VISTA RESIDENT CONVICTED OF CAUSING
A DANGEROUS FIRE**

El Paso County Attorney José R. Rodríguez announced today the sentencing of an individual accused of violating the Clean Air Act on a piece of property in the Montana Vista area of El Paso County.

Through the coordinated efforts of the El Paso County Sheriff's Department, 78-year-old Rosa Villanueva was charged with and pled guilty to illegal outdoor burning, a violation of the Texas Water Code section 7.177.

The offense occurred on June 13, 2005 when Rosa Galindo Villanueva was burning a mesquite bush behind her residence at 3699 Krag. The fire got out of control and traveled onto two neighboring residences equipped with propane tanks, endangering the lives of several families.

Today Rosa Villanueva pled guilty to illegal outdoor burning, and County Criminal Court at Law #1 Judge Alma Trejo sentenced her to pay a \$1,000.00 fine and court costs.

“Illegal outdoor burning is a serious environmental crime which we will prosecute to the fullest extent of the law,” said Rodríguez. “Burning waste, including yard waste, is dangerous and bad for the environment because it pollutes the already contaminated air we breathe.”

Rodríguez added that illegal outdoor burning is an on-going problem in the County of El Paso, and he stressed that the County Attorney's Office will continue to prosecute such offenders.

In the case of individuals, illegal outdoor burning is punishable with up to 180 days in jail and/or a fine between \$1,000 and \$50,000. Fines against associations and corporations run from \$1,000 up to \$100,000.

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To report illegal outdoor burning or other environmental crime, call your local law enforcement agency, the Environmental Hotline at 1-888-6EL-PASO, the El Paso Police Dept. at 832-4400, or El Paso Sheriff's Dept. at 546-2280.