



# NEWS RELEASE

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

GAMING CONTROL BOARD

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Thrifty Nickel Ad Gets Clovis Resident Arrested

**ALBUQUERQUE – August 31, 2004** – On Friday, August 27, Gaming Control Board enforcement agents responded to a local Thrifty Nickel ad featuring the sale of slot machines. The undercover agents met with John A. Mesner, at his personal residence in Clovis, New Mexico. Investigation revealed that Mesner, 59 of Clovis, had five illegal slot machines for sale. The illegal slot machines were seized. Mesner was arrested on five counts of possession of illegal gaming devices and one count of unlawful transportation, sale, and distribution of a gaming device. Mesner was booked into the Curry County Adult Detention Center. The case will be referred to the Ninth Judicial District Attorney's Office for prosecution.

Property taken or detained under the provisions of the Gaming Control Act and the Criminal Code remains in the custody of the Gaming Control Board Enforcement Division, subject only to the orders and decrees of the district court having jurisdiction. Gaming Control Act section 60-2E-53 stipulates that "a person who knowingly possesses any gaming device that has been manufactured, sold or distributed in violation of the Gaming Control Act [Chapter 60, Article 2E NMSA 1978] is guilty of a fourth degree felony." Gaming Control Act section 60-2E-55 stipulates that "a person who manufactures, sells or distributes a device that is intended by him to be used to violate any provision of the Gaming Control Act is guilty of a fourth degree felony." Since 1999, more than 2000 illegal gaming machines and components have been destroyed.

"We want to remind the public that the possession, sale and/or distribution of unlicensed gaming devices is a felony crime in New Mexico and is strictly enforced by the Gaming Control Board," stated Greg Saunders, Deputy Executive Director. If anyone has questions concerning a gaming device, they are urged to contact the Enforcement Division at 841-9700.

The New Mexico Gaming Control Board was established by statute in 1997 and funded during the 1998 legislative session. It began operations in June of 1998. The Board is responsible for regulating legalized gambling at licensed racetracks and qualified veteran's and fraternal organizations of New Mexico. The Board is also responsible for overseeing New Mexico's tribal gaming compacts through the appointment of the state gaming representative. The Board has 57 employees, which include licensing and background specialists, compliance auditors, attorneys, and certified peace officers.

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