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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Putnam County Sheriff's Office Sets Up Exchange Zone

PUTNAM COUNTY, TN – The Putnam County Sheriff's Office has set up an Exchange Zone for residents to complete the in-person sale of online items from websites such as Craigslist, Auto Trader, LSN and other trading/sales websites. The Exchange Zone, which is designated by new signs that were posted this week, is located behind the Sheriff's Office at the Justice Center on 421 Spring Street.

"In an era where so much business is conducted online, we saw a need for a safe place for people to conduct the final phase of their online transactions," said Sheriff Eddie Farris. "We hope that Putnam County residents will use our location as opposed to giving people their home address or meeting someone in an area that is not properly monitored or secure."

Transactions are limited to the Sheriff's Office parking lot only and can take place Monday – Friday after 5 p.m. and all day Saturday and Sunday. No transactions will be allowed inside the Sheriff's Office or the Justice Center. Deputies will not be responsible for refereeing sales transactions.

"With cameras monitoring the parking lot and deputies nearby, the initiative gives both buyers and sellers an additional option to safely complete their sales," added Farris. "There is nothing wrong with making transactions over the Internet, but we want to make sure that everybody is safe in doing so. While we have not seen many crimes resulting from in-person online sales, you do hear about horror stories where people have bought something and the next thing they know they are getting mugged or something worse."

Some Additional Safety Information from Craigslist:

The overwhelming majority of Craigslist users are trustworthy and well-intentioned. With billions of human interactions facilitated, the incidence of violent crime is extremely low. Nevertheless, please take the same common sense precautions online as you would offline. When meeting someone for the first time, please remember to:

- Insist on a public meeting place like a café;
- Do not meet in a secluded place or invite strangers into your home;
- Be especially careful buying/selling high value items;
- Consider making a high value exchange at your local police station;
- Tell a friend or family member where you are going;
- Take your cell phone along if you have one;
- Consider having a friend accompany you;
- Trust your instincts.

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For more information about personal safety online, check out these resources:

- <http://www.staysafeonline.org/>
- <http://www.onguardonline.gov/>
- <http://getsafeonline.org>
- <http://www.wiredsafety.org>

Please review the Craigslist “Avoiding Scams” page as well.

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