



Department of Justice

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ANOTHER PLEADS GUILTY, ANOTHER SENTENCED IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, ON FEDERAL FEMA FRAUD CHARGES

BATON ROUGE, LA – Another Louisiana resident was sentenced and another pled guilty yesterday in federal court on fraud charges related to hurricane disaster relief programs, United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced today.

GENEVA M. WAGNER, age 31, of Metairie, Louisiana, pled guilty yesterday to an indictment charging her with wire fraud in obtaining disaster unemployment benefits for alleged losses resulting from Hurricane Katrina. The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General. As a result of this guilty plea, WAGNER faces a maximum sentence of twenty years, a \$250,000 fine, or both.

SHARON D. DALCOURT, age 46, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, pled guilty on May 24, 2006, to an indictment charging her with making false and fraudulent statements to FEMA regarding damages incurred as a result of Hurricane Katrina. She was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Frank J. Polozola yesterday to three years of probation, 50 hours of community service, and \$2,608.26 in restitution. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted the investigation of this matter.

The number of individuals who have been charged in the Middle District of Louisiana with violations related to hurricane disaster relief funds stands at seventy-four.

In September 2005, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, designed to deter, investigate and prosecute disaster-related federal crimes such as charity fraud, identity theft, procurement fraud and insurance fraud. The Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force – chaired by Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division – includes the FBI, the U.S. Inspectors General community, the U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the Executive Office for United States Attorneys and others.

For further information, contact David R. Dugas, U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana, or Lyman Thornton, First Assistant U.S. Attorney, at (225) 389-0443. Anyone suspecting criminal activity involving disaster assistance programs can make an anonymous report by calling the toll-free Hurricane Relief Fraud Hotline, 1-866-720-5721, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, until further notice. Information can also be emailed to the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force at HKFTF@leo.gov or sent by surface mail, with as many details as possible, to Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4909.

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