



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney David R. Dugas  
Middle District of Louisiana

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## **ANOTHER SENTENCED IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, ON FEDERAL FEMA FRAUD CHARGES**

BATON ROUGE, LA – Another Louisiana resident was sentenced in federal court on Friday by U.S. District Court Judge John V. Parker on fraud charges related to a hurricane disaster relief program, United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced today.

EZRA HARRIS, age 38, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, pled guilty on July 5, 2006, to Count Two of an indictment charging HARRIS with illegal conversion of government property, that is, a check from FEMA for expedited disaster assistance. As part of the plea agreement, the United States agreed to dismiss Count One of the Indictment at sentencing. HARRIS was sentenced to thirty-six months of probation and \$2,000 in restitution. The U.S. Secret Service; and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, 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-nine.

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](mailto: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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