



Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of Texas

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FORMER RESIDENT PLEADS GUILTY TO CHARGE RELATED TO FEMA FRAUD SCHEME

(HOUSTON, Texas) – Priscilla A. Thomas, 39, a former Houston resident, entered a plea of guilty to mail fraud charges in connection with a false claim for Hurricane Katrina disaster assistance, United States Attorney Don DeGabrielle announced today.

Thomas was charged in a three-count indictment relating to three false claims for Hurricane Katrina disaster assistance. The claims were filed on or about Sept. 11, 2005, each falsely claiming primary residence in New Orleans, La., at the time of Hurricane Katrina. Thomas claimed that as a result of damage to her primary residence, she had an essential need for food, clothing and shelter as a result of the storm. Upon filing the claims, Thomas provided a Houston address as her current mailing address where payments were sent and subsequently received.

Thomas entered a plea of guilty to one count of mail fraud before Judge Kenneth M. Hoyt. Thomas is scheduled for sentencing May 27, 2008, at 10:00 a.m. at which time she faces a statutory punishment range of up to 20 years imprisonment, a maximum term of three years supervised release and a \$100 special assessment for each count of conviction.

This case was investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Inspector General, and will be prosecuted by Special Assistant United States Attorney Tammie Y. Moore.

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