



Department of Justice

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THREE GUILTY PLEAS IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, TO FEDERAL FEMA FRAUD CHARGES

BATON ROUGE, LA – United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced that three Louisiana residents pled guilty today before District Court Judge James J. Brady to federal FEMA fraud charges.

REGINALD JOHNSON, age 25, a resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, pled guilty today to a Bill of Information charging JOHNSON with making a false claim for disaster relief benefits.

LEEANN CRAWFORD, age 24, a resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, pled guilty today to Count One of an indictment charging CRAWFORD with making false and fraudulent claims for disaster relief benefits. As part of the plea agreement, the U.S. Attorney's Office will dismiss Count Two of the indictment when CRAWFORD is sentenced on Count One.

BRUCE P. MANYLUK, age 58, a resident of Metairie, Louisiana, pled guilty today to Count One of an indictment charging MANYLUK with making false and fraudulent claims for disaster relief benefits. As part of the plea agreement, the U.S. Attorney's Office will dismiss Count Two of the indictment when MANYLUK is sentenced on Count One.

As a result of these guilty pleas, each defendant faces a sentence of imprisonment of a maximum of five (5) years and a \$250,000 fine, or both.

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 members from the FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, the Postal Inspector's Office, and the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, among others. This case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General.

The total number of defendants who have been charged in the Middle District of Louisiana with violations related to FEMA relief funds stands at forty-two.

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.

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