



Department of Justice

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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 by U.S. District Court Judge James J. Brady on fraud charges related to a hurricane disaster relief program, United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced today.

TERRY WATSON, age 40, of Zachary, Louisiana, pled guilty on July 5, 2006, to Count One of an indictment charging him with making a false claim for Hurricane Katrina disaster assistance benefits. WATSON was sentenced to two years of probation, a \$250 fine, \$2,000 in restitution, and 50 hours of community service. The Federal Bureau of Investigation 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 eighty.

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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