



Department of Justice

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ANOTHER PLEADS GUILTY IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, TO FEDERAL FRAUD CHARGE

BATON ROUGE, LA – Another Louisiana resident pled guilty in federal court yesterday on a charge of fraud related to a hurricane disaster relief program, United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced.

FRED DANIEL MILLER, age 40, of Conway, Arkansas, pled guilty yesterday before U.S. District Court Judge James J. Brady to an indictment charging him with wire fraud. According to the Factual Basis, MILLER had filed for benefits under the Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) program, which is funded by FEMA to provide financial assistance to individuals whose employment has been lost or interrupted as a direct result of a major disaster. MILLER was incarcerated at Orleans Parish Prison before Hurricane Katrina struck the state in August 2005 and was evacuated to several detention facilities before being released on September 30, 2005. As an inmate, MILLER was unemployed and not entitled to disaster unemployment assistance. Based upon his false claim, MILLER received approximately \$3,822 in DUA payments to which he was not entitled. The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. As a result of his guilty plea, MILLER faces a maximum sentence of twenty (20) years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both.

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

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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