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Disaster Fraud Hotline Available to Report Hurricane Gustav-related Fraud

WASHINGTON – In the wake of Hurricane Gustav and resulting recovery efforts, the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force is reminding members of the public to report any instances of alleged fraudulent activity related to Hurricane Gustav, announced Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana David R. Dugas.

Members of the public can report fraud, waste, abuse or allegations of mismanagement involving disaster relief operations through the Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721, the Disaster Fraud Fax at 225-334-4707 or the Disaster Fraud e-mail at disaster@leo.gov. Individuals can also report criminal activity to the FBI at 1-800-CALL-FBI or www.fbi.gov.

The Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force was established in 2005 following the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma. In anticipation of an unprecedented amount of fraud associated with federal disaster relief programs that went into effect following those devastating natural disasters, a Joint Command Center was established in Baton Rouge, La., to coordinate the huge number of reports of fraud. To date, the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force has brought charges against 898 defendants in 43 judicial districts. The Command Center has received and screened more than 26,000 complaints of disaster fraud and referred more than 17,000 of those to law enforcement for investigation. The Task Force is chaired by the Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division.

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