



Department of Justice

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**FORMER SAND AND GRAVEL SUBCONTRACTOR SENTENCED TO
5 YEARS IN PRISON AFTER CONSPIRACY AND BRIBERY CONVICTION
IN CONNECTION WITH A LEVEE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT**

WASHINGTON — A former sand and gravel subcontractor was sentenced today to serve five years in prison and to pay a \$5,000 criminal fine by U.S. District Judge Carl J. Barbier after being convicted by a federal jury of conspiracy and bribery in connection with a \$16 million hurricane protection project for the reconstruction a New Orleans levee, the Department of Justice announced today. The project involved the Lake Cataouatche Levee, which is south of New Orleans.

Durwanda Elizabeth Morgan Heinrich was found guilty on April 1, 2009, of conspiracy and bribery. The conduct centered on Heinrich's offer to pay Kern Carver Bernard Wilson and Raul Miranda, former contract employees of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in exchange for their attempt to steer a dirt, sand and gravel subcontract on the levee project to her. Heinrich planned to use part of the proceeds from the subcontract to pay the bribes. A jury found both Heinrich and Wilson guilty in the charged conspiracy and bribery. The court sentenced Wilson on Aug. 5, 2009, to serve 70 months in jail and to pay a \$15,000 criminal fine. Miranda pleaded guilty on Sept. 12, 2007, to agreeing to accept the bribe and awaits sentencing.

This sentencing is the result of an ongoing investigation of fraud in the procurement of levee reconstruction contracts let by the Corps of Engineers. The investigation is being conducted by the Antitrust Division's Dallas Field Office, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Louisiana, the Vicksburg Fraud Resident Agency of the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command and the Department of Defense's Criminal Investigative Service through the Disaster Fraud Task Force.

In September 2005, the Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, now the Disaster Fraud Task Force, was created to deter, investigate and prosecute disaster-related federal crimes. To date, the Task Force has charged 1301 defendants in 1216 cases.

Anyone with information concerning anticompetitive conduct, fraud or other allegations of illegal activity concerning hurricane-related projects is urged to call the Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721, the Antitrust Division's Dallas Field Office at 214-661-8600, or the Division's Atlanta Field Office at 404-331-7100.

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