



Department of Justice

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Eastern District of Texas

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BEAUMONT MAN GUILTY OF HURRICANE FRAUD

BEAUMONT TX – United States Attorney John L. Ratcliffe announced that a 50-year-old Beaumont man has pleaded guilty to hurricane related fraud in the Eastern District of Texas.

WILYUM HENDERSON was indicted by a federal grand jury on September 6, 2007 and charged with making a false statement to FEMA in connection with an application he filed for federal disaster relief.

According to information presented in court, beginning in October 2005, Henderson filed a claim with FEMA in which he requested Disaster Housing and Individual Assistance for losses he reportedly suffered from Hurricane Rita, although he did not suffer those losses. Henderson received \$2,000.00 in assistance as a result of his fictitious claims.

Henderson faces up to five years in federal prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.00. A sentencing date has not been set.

In September 2005, the U.S. Department of Justice 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 of the FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, and the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, among others.

This case is being investigated by the United States Postal Service and the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Randall L. Fluke.

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