



**U. S. Department of Justice
U. S. Attorney's Office
Southern District of Texas**
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**HOUSTON MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FILING FALSE CLAIM WITH FEMA FOR
HURRICANE KATRINA DISASTER FUNDS**

(HOUSTON, TX) United States Attorney Chuck Rosenberg announced today that Clifford Neville, 53, of Houston, Texas, has been convicted of filing a false claim with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for Hurricane Katrina Disaster funds

At a hearing held yesterday, February 13, 2006, before United States District Judge Nancy Atlas, Neville pleaded guilty to the federal felony charge of filing a false claim in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 287. Judge Atlas scheduled Neville's sentencing for May 5, 2006. At sentencing, Neville faces a maximum punishment of five years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine.

The case against Neville is the result of an investigation initiated by a tip to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General (DHS-OIG). According to the tip, Neville had filed a false claim for FEMA assistance. DHS-OIG agents found that two claims had been filed in Neville's name for FEMA Hurricane Katrina disaster assistance. The first claim, filed on September 9, 2005, listed Neville's primary residence as Louis XIV street in New Orleans. Based on that claim, Neville received \$2,000 in expedited disaster assistance. Further investigation by DHS-OIG agents proved not only that Neville had been living in Houston when Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans, but that Neville had never resided in New Orleans.

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On October 1, 2005, the second claim was filed in Neville's name for FEMA Hurricane Katrina disaster assistance. The second claim again listed the primary residence of Louis XIV Street in New Orleans. Because the information in the second claim matched the information from the first claim, FEMA computers flagged the second claim and no payment was ever made as a result of that claim.

The United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas is a member of the Department of Justice's Hurricane Katrina Fraud Task Force, created by Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales to deter, detect and prosecute unscrupulous individuals who try to take advantage of the Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita disasters. Headed by Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher, the Task Force is comprised of federal, state, and local law enforcement investigating agencies and the United States Attorney's Offices in the Gulf Coast region and nationwide. This matter was investigated by the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Gregg Costa.

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