



Department of Justice

Acting United States Attorney Stan Harris
Southern District of Mississippi

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FORMER HATTIESBURG MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO KATRINA FRAUD

Hattiesburg, Mississippi - Acting United States Attorney Stan Harris announced today that a former Hattiesburg resident entered a guilty plea in United States District Court in Hattiesburg for FEMA fraud.

LESLEY F. JONES, now of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, pled guilty to stealing government funds from FEMA for Hurricane Katrina disaster assistance funds. Jones received \$5,462 from FEMA by providing a false address in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and claiming hurricane damage at that address. At the time Hurricane Katrina hit the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Jones was living in Wisconsin. Jones will be sentenced by United States District Court Judge Keith Starrett on April 30, 2009, and faces a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000.00 fine

In September, 2005, the Department of Justice created the national 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 Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, Rita M. Glavin, includes members from the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General, FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, the Department of Labor Office of Inspector General, the Postal Inspector's Office and the Executive Office of United States Attorneys, among others.

Pursuant to the Justice Department initiative, a local Katrina Fraud Task Force, consisting of over 20 Federal and State law enforcement agencies, was formed in the Southern District of Mississippi to pursue and prosecute individuals who engage in fraud associated with the hurricanes.

If anyone has information concerning possible fraud being committed during the post-Katrina recovery effort, please call either the DHS-OIG Fraud Hotline at 1-866-720-5721 or the FBI Fraud Hotline at 1-800-225-5324.

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