



# Department of Justice

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## **FOUR INDICTED FOR HURRICANE KATRINA FRAUD**

ATLANTA, GA - KRISTINE CLARK, 37, of Decatur, Georgia; MICHAEL ROUZAN, 24, of Decatur, Georgia; MARKISHA BURKS, 26, of Texas, and LUCIEN DANTHON, 43, of Atlanta, Georgia, have been indicted by a federal grand jury on felony charges for fraudulently obtaining FEMA assistance funds intended for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. CLARK and ROUZAN, who were charged in a single indictment, and DANTHON, who was charged in a separate indictment, are expected to make an initial appearance later this week before United States Magistrate Judge Alan J. Baverman. BURKS, who was also charged separately, is believed to have been residing recently in the Dallas, Texas area.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, "As we enter hurricane season this week and approach the fourth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, these three indictments serve as a reminder that the Justice Department remains vigilant in prosecuting criminals who seek to enrich themselves by stealing disaster assistance funds intended for the victims of natural disasters. These defendants allegedly took thousands of dollars intended to benefit real victims of Hurricane Katrina. Anyone who would consider embarking on a similar fraud should know that we will continue to aggressively investigate and prosecute these cases."

According to United States Attorney Nahmias, the charges and other information presented in court: CLARK and ROUZAN allegedly filed a Hurricane Katrina claim in September 2005 at a disaster center in Dekalb County, Georgia, claiming that they had been residing in New Orleans, Louisiana at the time Hurricane Katrina made landfall, when in fact CLARK had been residing in Pasadena, California and ROUZAN had been residing in the metro Atlanta area. To perpetuate the fraud, CLARK and ROUZAN allegedly provided a Louisiana address where they did not live and falsely claimed that their personal property had been damaged by the hurricane. Based on their misrepresentations, CLARK and ROUZAN received over \$32,000 for personal property damage and housing and rental assistance. CLARK and ROUZAN also allegedly received hotel reimbursement for the time they stayed in various hotels in Decatur, Georgia, from September 2005 to May 2006 and again from March 2008 to August 2008. In addition, they allegedly received a FEMA travel trailer in Hammond, Louisiana, where they resided from May 2006 to March 2008.

A separate indictment charges that BURKS allegedly falsely represented to FEMA that she was a resident of New Orleans, Louisiana at the time of Hurricane Katrina, when in fact she was residing in McDonough, Georgia. To perpetuate the fraud, BURKS allegedly provided a Louisiana address where she did not live and falsely claimed that her residence was damaged by the hurricane. Based on her misrepresentations, BURKS received \$2,000

in emergency housing assistance and more than \$9,000 for rental assistance and personal property damage from FEMA.

Another separate indictment alleges that DANTHON falsely represented to FEMA that he was a resident of New Orleans at the time of Hurricane Katrina, when in fact he was residing in the metro Atlanta area. To perpetuate the fraud, DANTHON allegedly provided a Louisiana address where he did not live and falsely claimed that his residence was damaged by the hurricane. Based on his misrepresentations, DANTHON received more than \$18,500 for emergency housing assistance, rental assistance, and personal property damage from FEMA.

The indictment filed against CLARK and ROUZAN charges four counts of mail fraud, one count of false statements, and four counts of theft of government funds. The indictment filed against BURKS charges one count of mail fraud, five counts of wire fraud, one count of false statements, and five counts of theft of government funds. The indictment filed against DANTHON charges five counts of wire fraud, five counts of false statements, and five counts of theft of government funds. All three indictments include a forfeiture provision seeking full repayment of the funds. The mail and wire fraud counts each carry a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison, the false statements counts each carry a maximum sentence of five years in prison, and the theft of government funds counts each carry a maximum of ten years in prison. Each count carries a maximum fine of up to \$250,000. In determining the actual sentence, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictments contain only allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

In September 2005, the Attorney General 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 Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division – includes members from the FBI, the Federal Trade Commission, the Postal Inspector's Office and the Executive Office of United States Attorneys, among others. <http://www.projectsafchildhood.gov>.

These cases are being investigated by Special Agents of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General.

Assistant United States Attorneys Stephen H. McClain and Gerald S. Sachs are prosecuting the cases.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is [www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan).