



# NEWS RELEASE

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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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## **EAST TEXAN SENTENCED FOR HURRICANE RELATED FRAUD**

(Tyler, TX) United States Attorney Matthew D. Orwig announced today that a 43-year-old Palestine, Texas man has been sentenced to ten months in federal prison for posing as a Hurricane Katrina victim and attempting to defraud the federal government. WALTER RAY STALL, aka RAY JOHNSON, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Leonard Davis.

U.S. Attorney Orwig was pleased with the sentence, "Even as we enter into this year's hurricane season, we will continue to investigate and prosecute those who attempted to take advantage of last year's national tragedies."

According to information presented in court, Stall devised a scheme to defraud the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) by submitting a false claim stating that he was a resident of New Orleans and entitled to receive disaster benefits because of damage to his residence, personal property and vehicle. In fact, Stall was a resident of Palestine, Texas and never experienced hurricane related losses. Stall committed mail fraud when he caused a FEMA issued treasury check to be delivered to him at an address in Tyler, Texas.

Stall was indicted on October 4, 2005 and charged with mail fraud.

This case is part of an initiative by the U.S. Department of Justice Hurricane Fraud Task Force, established by Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales to deter, investigate and prosecute disaster-related federal crimes such as charity fraud, identity theft and insurance and benefits fraud.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Tyler Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Alan Jackson prosecuted the case.

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