



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
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Three Arrested for Sandy Aid Scams

New York—October 30, 2013, Three suspects who schemed to bilk the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the wake of Super Storm Sandy have been arrested and charged with fraud following an investigation by agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General. The arrests and charges were announced on October 29, one year to the day that Sandy ravaged the New York-New Jersey region.

Joseph McClam, 52, allegedly pocketed more than \$32,000 in FEMA assistance after claiming a damaged Brooklyn apartment was his primary residence. His actual residence was found to be in Raleigh, NC. Jena Sowinski, 37, claimed her Long Island home was heavily damaged and received more than \$18,000 in FEMA relief. OIG investigators determined she was a tenant in the home, which had only minor storm damage. Tselane Gibbs, 31, also of Long Island, fraudulently obtained more than \$18,000 in FEMA aid to relocate to a Brooklyn apartment. She admitted to OIG investigators that she had never lived in the Brooklyn unit.

“A few rapacious individuals saw FEMA assistance as an opportunity for fraud, Brooklyn U.S. Attorney Loretta Lynch told the New York Daily News, which first reported on the case. “The defendants charged today brazenly stole disaster relief funds, rubbing salt in the wounds of their neighbors and community.”

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