



Department of Justice

Acting United States Attorney Kathleen M. Mehlretter
Western District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 15, 2009
www.usdoj.gov/usao/nyw

CONTACT: Jean L. Bowman
PHONE: (716) 843-5835
FAX: (716) 551-3051

THREE CHARGED IN HURRICANE KATRINA FRAUD CASE

BUFFALO, N.Y.-- Acting United States Attorney Kathleen M. Mehlretter announced today that Mark Anderson, 44, Sylvester Marshall, 63, and Gayle Porter, 60, were charged in criminal complaints with defrauding the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) following the landfall of Hurricane Katrina. The charges carry a maximum penalty of 30 years imprisonment, a fine of \$1,000,000, or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Aaron J. Mango stated that the complaints charge the defendants with theft of government money and mail fraud following the defendants' fraudulent claims to FEMA for disaster assistance in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. All three defendants applied for FEMA assistance on account of damages they alleged suffered as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The defendants claimed that at the time Hurricane Katrina made landfall, they were residing in New Orleans and that due to Hurricane Katrina, they were forced to relocate to Buffalo, New York. However, evidence establishes that all three defendants were either living in Buffalo, New York or had a permanent residence in Buffalo, New York at the time Hurricane Katrina made landfall.

The complaints allege that Anderson fraudulently obtained \$15,189, Marshall fraudulently obtained \$16,693, and Porter fraudulently obtained \$10,391 in FEMA funds.

The complaints were the culmination of an investigation on the part of Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General, under the direction of Resident Agent in Charge Gregory Null. Assistant U.S. Attorney Aaron J. Mango will handle the trial of the case.

The fact that a defendant has been charged with a crime is merely an accusation and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

###