

Source: The Buzbee Law Firm and Bencomo & Associates

## **Manufacturers of Toxic Hurricane Relief Trailers Should Be Investigated, According to Legal Team for Displaced Gulf Coast Citizens**

NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 14 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The following statement was issued by the seven-law firm Plaintiffs' Steering Committee representing thousands of Gulf Coast citizens who reside or have resided in allegedly toxic travel trailers distributed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) after the landfalls of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005.

According to Raul Bencomo, of Bencomo & Associates, in New Orleans, "Although it took FEMA nearly two years to investigate the trailer residents' concerns, the families we represent are relieved to see that the long-term health risks, including cancer risks, associated with formaldehyde exposure in these trailers, finally have the attention of the federal government. With today's announcements, FEMA and the CDC acknowledge the experiences and findings of the families in these trailers, the medical community, environmental groups, and our legal team. The fact is that these trailers present a serious health risk. Further, while it is a good first step for the government to test some trailers, it needs to test every single trailer that is currently occupied. Limited testing of these units is not enough. We call on FEMA and the CDC to test every remaining occupied trailer immediately."

According to Tony Buzbee, of the Buzbee Law Firm, in Galveston, Texas, "While we question FEMA's handling of this health issue, we agree with the agency that the ultimate responsibility for the safety of families using these trailers falls to the manufacturers. We allege that the manufacturers produced and delivered tens of thousands of unsafe and hazardous travel trailers, at a cost to our government of more than \$2.4 billion, and we urge the federal government to investigate the manufacturers of these units immediately. As we believe the litigation will show, these trailer manufacturers knew of and failed to disclose the health risks of putting displaced families in these units. Our clients report a wide range of symptoms that are consistent with formaldehyde exposure and consistent with the CDC's reports. The time has come for the government to force the industry to explain how and why these housing units were so toxic to the displaced families living in them."

The families are represented in pending federal litigation against more than a dozen trailer manufacturers by attorneys Gerald Meunier and Justin Woods, of Gainsburgh, Benjamin, David, Meunier & Warshauer, L.L.C., in New Orleans (Plaintiffs' Co-Liaison Counsel); Mr. Bencomo; Mr. Buzbee; Frank D'Amico, Jr., D'Amico & Associates, in New Orleans; Matthew Moreland, of the Becnel Law Firm, in Reserve, Louisiana; Linda Nelson, of Lambert & Nelson, in New Orleans; and Ronnie Penton, of the Law Offices of Ronnie G. Penton; in Slidell, Louisiana.

The litigation is "In Re FEMA Trailer Formaldehyde Product Liability Litigation" (MDL No. 1873), in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, New Orleans Division.

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