

Source: The Buzbee Law Firm and Bencomo & Associates

FEMA Urged to Admit Role in Toxic Trailer Cover-Up, According to Legal Team for Hurricane Victims

NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 29 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The following statement was issued on behalf of 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, "The families we represent are shocked and disappointed by reports that FEMA apparently took steps to prevent another federal agency – the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry – from publicly disclosing the long-term health risks, including cancer risks, associated with formaldehyde exposure in these trailers. This action by FEMA is particularly egregious since approximately 40,000 travel trailers remain in use today, housing families that have every right to know about possible health problems associated with ongoing formaldehyde exposure. For these men, women and children who already have suffered the trauma of disaster and displacement, there can be no justice until FEMA acknowledges the roles of both the trailer manufacturers and the government in this health crisis. These families continue to ask for an open and honest discussion of all known short-term and long-term health risks associated with the formaldehyde in these travel trailers."

According to Tony Buzbee, of the Buzbee Law Firm, in Galveston, Texas, "Because many of the travel trailers now are being reclaimed and deactivated by FEMA, we are working with counsel for FEMA to arrange for the scientific testing of formaldehyde levels in a sample group of trailers, in order to preserve this evidence and confirm the truth about what has happened. While we continue to question FEMA's handling of this important health issue, we agree with the agency's previous statements that the ultimate responsibility for the safety of families using these trailers falls to the manufacturers. We hope that, despite this recent revelation, FEMA will cooperate in ensuring that these trailers will be properly tested."

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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