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News release

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Hurricane Evacuee ID Theft Scheme Brings Arrests

(Houston, Texas) Harris County District Attorney Kenneth Magidson on Friday announced the arrests of two men accused of stealing the identities of at least 12 Hurricane Ike evacuees who sought shelter in a Red Cross facility after the storm.

The defendants, Michael Biles and Gregory Lewis, allegedly posed as recruiters for a local company seeking applicants for temporary employment. Investigators said the pair asked shelter residents for personal information such as Social Security numbers, dates of birth, home addresses, and even voided checks from some of the victims. Although the men represented themselves as employees of RDL Energy Services, they had no affiliation with the company.

They were arrested and charged Thursday with the second degree felony of Fraudulent Use/Possession of Identifying Information. The men face up to 20 years in prison if convicted. Bonds have been set at \$50,000 each.

“We will not tolerate criminals taking advantage of these victims who were particularly vulnerable due to the hurricane,” District Attorney Magidson said. “They will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.”

Any others who believe they may have been victimized in this scheme should call Sgt. Merritt at the Pasadena Police Department, at (713) 477-1221.