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SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2005

Katrina Relief Money Poured Into Sleazy Companies

by Michael in New York on [9/18/2005 08:35:00 PM](#)

More in the endless stories of no-bid contracts for the rebuilding of the Gulf region going to Halliburton (of course) and **numerous companies who are under investigation or have recently been forced to pay fines for illegal activities.** Says USA Today:

A division of Fluor, a California firm awarded a housing contract worth up to \$100 million, has paid millions of dollars to settle federal government lawsuits — including one that accused it of overbilling for 1989 hurricane cleanup work.

The Shaw Group, a Louisiana firm that won housing and engineering contracts worth up to \$200 million, has disclosed that it is being investigated by the Securities and Exchange Commission. The firm is also a defendant in federal securities class-action cases.

But don't blame the government:

FEMA spokesman Widomski said his agency had been **unaware of both the SEC matter and the securities class-action lawsuits** involving the Shaw Group.

"Right now, **there isn't a place for the federal government to get a history of a company's business background,**" she said. "There should be one place where they can look."

Gee, well here's a thought. I don't recall ever applying for a job without filling out a form asking if I'd ever committed a felony, been arrested, etc. Before giving a company \$100 million to splurge on, how about asking them if they're under investigation of any sort at the local, state or federal level, ever paid fines in a dispute, ever been found guilty, etc?

Anyone who lies loses the contract and pays a massive fine. Anyone who answers yes is placed in the back of the line or eliminated altogether automatically. Can't the gov't have zero tolerance for cheats? Now was that so hard?



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Open Thread and Diary Rescue - *Tonight's crew of Rescue Rangers were vcmvo2, grog, dopper0189, shayera, and joyful. In the meantime, dadanation looked editorial. Oh yeah, a big shout ...
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Open Thread - Andy K here blogging about Andy Kaufman (no relation), who's on the same stage with Wolfman Jack? Whelp, there goes that theory. h/t to Ben Folds (yes, ...
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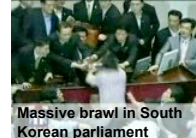
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