

February 18, 2008

Dear Friends of CHAT,

First some website news, we now have a table of contents for the chat.thinknola.com site. This lets readers click on a topic and go to it, thanks to the work of a generous friend in Atlanta of Laura LeBon, an Exec. Bd. member of CHAT.

Secondly, I sent tonight an email to several RH officials that included parts of an email sent to RH and cc'ed to me from an understandably distressed applicant. I give part of it below and then part of the response of a top RH official. I made both anonymous.

Applicant email that was cc'ed to me:

As my Personal Application Liaison, I have left you three messages and now am trying to reach you by email regarding my application. I submitted a summary of my problem to a Housing Advisor in person at a Road Home Housing Center . Additionally, I submitted photos which were uploaded to my file to support my assertion that the Road Home grossly underestimated the cost of damages to my home as result of Hurricane Katrina. I have been advised by the Housing Advisor I met with in person and with a resolution officer whom I spoke with on the phone that in order to dispute the cost of estimated damages established by the Road Home, I must do so using the CAD report. I have requested that report now six times beginning in mid-December and have still not received this report.

Thank You

Applicant XXX

Response from a Road Home Official

Melanie Please let us know who they are and who the PAL is. If you tell us who the applicant is we can find out who the PAL is. If someone is not doing their job correctly we need to fix it. This is about customer service. There are nearly 30,000 people who have a PAL. Not everything will go perfect with 30,000 people getting a PAL, but if we can fix a bad PAL we need to do that.

XXX, A Top Road Home Official

So, if you have trouble getting a CAD or with an obviously very wrong estimate of the percentage damage greatly reducing your grant or if you cannot get your case manager (PAL) to return calls or emails after several attempts, I invite you :

to send an email to chatlra@yahoo.com  
with your name, application ID,  
address of damaged house,  
date of applying for program,  
date of receiving notice of your award,  
approximate date of entering and exiting from dispute resolution or appeals (if you were in dispute resolution or appeals,  
and a brief description of your problem.

Be sure to put **Send CAD or PAL Problem** in the subject line of your message.

*This is, of course, purely optional and CHAT cannot guarantee any results nor can we follow-up on this for you, unfortunately, because we are a small group of core CHAT members.*

If you want to send such an email, we will forward it to this official.

Thirdly, we are gathering some information about the problem of taxing RH money when an applicant had declared a casualty loss on their post-hurricane income tax statement and will soon send a message about that. Once again, we are no experts on this and will mostly just forward emails from others for you to decide yourselves what to do. If any of you have some authoritative information, please send it to chatlra@yahoo.com with **RH Tax Problem** in the subject line.

Best wishes,

Melanie Ehrlich