U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

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News Releases

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ICE arrests 15 illegal contract workers at oil refinery in northern Indiana

Arrests are part ICE's mission to ensure a legal workforce at nation's critical infrastructure sites

WHITING, Ind. - U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents arrested 15 illegal aliens here Wednesday who were working as contract janitorial workers at the BP Whiting oil refinery. These arrests are the result of a two-year critical infrastructure worksite enforcement investigation that is continuing.

ICE initiated the investigation after receiving information that illegal aliens were being contracted by an Illinois company to work at the BP refinery, and that they had access to secure areas of the plant. ICE identifies oil refineries as critical infrastructure, which are crucial to our nation's ability to function and are vulnerable to sabotage, attack or exploitation.

"There is a serious public safety concern when illegal aliens, who are not authorized to work in the country legally, are working in secure areas of one of our nation's largest oil refineries," said Gary Hartwig, special agent-in-charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in Chicago. "While there is no reason to believe that these individuals had ill intent against our country, their illegal status represents a significant vulnerability in our national security. ICE will continue to partner with critical infrastructure facilities and ensure they have a legal workforce."

The illegal workers arrested on administrative immigration charges - 11 females and four males - were all employed by United Building Maintenance (UBM) of Carol Stream, Ill. They performed janitorial duties at the BP refinery. Of those arrested, 14 are illegal aliens from Mexico and one is from Guatemala. All of those taken into ICE custody will be fingerprinted, photographed and placed into deportation proceedings.

All individuals arrested were thoroughly questioned by ICE to determine if they have medical, caregiver, or other humanitarian issues. Based on these interviews, ICE agents determine whether to detain or

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