

Immigration raid nets 20 arrests at Houston Shipley Do-Nut plant

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By JAMES PINKERTON

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[Video Interview Link](#)

Federal agents are at a large Shipley Do-Nuts facility on Houston's north side, where they have arrested 20 workers suspected of being illegal immigrants.

Agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement executed a search warrant about 5 a.m. at the Shipley manufacturing process center in the 5200 block of North Main.

Harris County sheriff's deputies are assisting in the raid, which took place after a caravan of about 50 federal and county vehicles drove to the center.

An ICE helicopter hovered over the site while sheriff's deputies guarded the perimeter and federal agents went inside. A number of workers were brought out in handcuffs while agents sorted through company documents and interviewed other employees.

"It's a worksite enforcement operation," said Robert Rutt, agent in charge of the ICE office in Houston.

He said the number of suspected undocumented workers arrested at the complex is include some who lived at the facility. Those arrested includes one juvenile.

A Shipley official at the site declined to comment.

The center, a four-block compound where dough is processed for use in Shipley's local shops, includes a residential facility for workers.

This morning's raid appears to be the largest ICE operation in Houston this year.

The local arrests comes on a day when immigration agents also raided a poultry plant in north Arkansas this morning and made some arrests for suspected immigration violations. ICE agents also served arrest warrants in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia and Georgia as part of an investigation of illegal immigrants, said ICE spokesman Michael Gilhooly in Buffalo, N.Y

Officials with ICE and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Texas will host a news conference at 2:30 p.m. today to provide details of the nationwide immigration crackdown .

Rutt said this morning's operation in Houston was planned after the agency received information that illegal immigrants were working at the Shipley facility.

"Worksite enforcement is a priority for ICE, and our main focus is identifying the employers who hire illegal aliens," he said.

He added that no one in management has been taken into custody. The arrested workers hail from Mexico, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

A worker who identified himself only as Marco Antonio said he arrived at 5 a.m. as the raid was beginning.

"I came to work. They wouldn't let me in because the agents were here," said the man, dressed in a white Shipley uniform.

The employee, who would not disclose his own immigration status, said he has worked at the site for 10 years.

"I think it's unjust," he said. "There are a lot of people here who've been working for a lot of years."

Others nearby approached him and advised him to stop talking. It was unclear whether they were co-workers or just acquaintances of his.

At a small shop across North Main, a mechanic who gave his name as Mauricio Salto watched as federal agents removed documents and other items from the company offices.

"For those immigrants who don't have documents, these raids bring fear," he said. "For those who have them, there's no problem."

He said he is from Mexico, but would not say whether he has the needed documents.

The Associated Press contributed to this report