

Owner of New Bedford company accused of hiring illegals

Published Tuesday, March 6, 2007

The Associated Press

NEW BEDFORD, Mass.

The owner and three managers of a New Bedford leather manufacturer were arrested Tuesday for allegedly hiring illegal immigrants as federal officials continued a crackdown on employers that's meant to staunch the flow of illegal workers.

The arrests at Michael Bianco, Inc. came as Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers raided the company on Tuesday morning.

The U.S. Attorney's office and a spokesman for ICE did not immediately release the names of those arrested, or provide details of the raid or the charges.

Marc Raimondi, a spokesman ICE, said the raid followed an 11-month investigation.

Calls to the company were not answered Tuesday morning.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security officials have said they're stepping-up efforts to target employers who hire illegals. Last week, a five former managers from IFCO Systems North America, a pallet recycling company, pleaded guilty in federal court in Albany, N.Y., to hiring undocumented foreign workers.