



News Releases
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Phoenix, AZ

ICE arrests 108 at Phoenix human smuggling drop house



PHOENIX - Agents with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) discovered 108 illegal aliens at a drop house in west Phoenix Wednesday.

The agents, assigned to the ICE HSI Drop House Response Group in Phoenix, were drawn to the house by reports of multiple vehicles quickly entering and leaving the garage—activities that are consistent with human smuggling. The agents knocked on the front door and were given permission to enter. Inside, they discovered the aliens packed in every room of the four-bedroom house located on the 9000 block of West Vernon Avenue.

The aliens are from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. There were five teenage boys and 14 women found among the group.

Agents identified a number of suspected human smugglers at the scene and are interviewing those individuals and the other persons found inside the residence as part of an ongoing investigation into the broader smuggling scheme.

This was the largest drop house discovered in the Phoenix metropolitan area since March 2008 when 124 aliens were apprehended at a drop house in Peoria. It is the second largest drop house discovered since ICE began tracking them in January 2006.

ICE HSI established the Drop House Response Group in September 2009 to identify, target and dismantle the infrastructure used by human smuggling organizations operating in the Phoenix metropolitan area.