

## **ICE Catches Construction & Staffing Companies Hiring Undocumented Workers**

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Two Illinois construction companies pleaded guilty and were sentenced in federal court on April 23, 2010 on charges related to the unlawful employment of illegal aliens while two Illinois staffing companies were charged with unlawfully hiring dozens of illegal aliens to form their labor pool.

Wedekemper's Inc. and Wedekemper's Construction Inc., both of Carlyle, Illinois., were fined \$500 and \$2,500, respectively, plus ordered to forfeit \$5,500 and \$12,500, respectively. Additionally, both companies were ordered to participate in the E-Verify employment eligibility verification system for a period of five years.

The investigation was initiated in June 2009 when the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) office in St. Louis, Mo., received information that a previously deported alien was employed by Wedekemper's Construction. Further investigation by ICE revealed several other illegal aliens were also employed by the company. ICE agents arrested and charged six employees of Wedekemper's Construction with various criminal offenses, including misuse of a Social Security number, possession of a fraudulent green card, and reentry after deportation.

As these companies were pleading guilty, the president and office manager of two Bensenville, Ill., staffing companies were charged with unlawfully hiring illegal aliens between October 2006 and October 2007. The charges seek forfeiture from Clinton Roy Perkins, the president of the two companies, of \$488,095, which was seized from various bank accounts as well as the Bensenville office. In addition to hiring illegal workers, the defendants allegedly paid their workers' wages in cash and failed to deduct payroll taxes or other withholdings.

The charges allege Perkins and his son-in-law directed low-level supervisory employees to transport illegal workers back and forth between locations near the aliens' residences in Chicago and work sites in the suburbs. Both also allegedly provided bogus six-digit numbers - purporting to be the last six digits of the aliens' Social Security numbers - to a company, knowing the workers were in the country illegally and did not possess valid Social Security numbers.