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Area companies are indicted for illegal-alien scheme

Kansas City Business Journal - June 18, 2007 by [Steve Vockrodt](#) Staff Writer

Federal prosecutors indicted four Kansas City-area roofing companies along with nine owners and employees, alleging that they had participated in a scheme to bring illegal aliens into the United States, use them in their labor force and launder more than \$6 million to pay them.

Authorities recently arrested six of the nine individuals named in the indictment and took an additional 34 illegal aliens into custody on administrative charges.

The 15-count indictment, which a grand jury issued May 29, was unsealed Monday afternoon.

It alleges that Tony Evans, 48, of Stilwell, former president of Mid-Continent Specialists and current president of Metro Roofing, used illegal workers to do roofing jobs with the company.

To pay the illegal workers, he allegedly laundered at least \$6 million through businesses created by Luis Hernandez-Bautista, 33, of Kansas City, which included LH Roofing.

LH Roofing hired the illegal workers as subcontractors as a cover for Mid-Continent Specialists, according to the indictment. Some of the workers cashed checks and disbursed money to other illegal workers.

The scheme started when Hernandez-Bautista was arrested March 28, 2001, along with 22 other illegal aliens, by immigration authorities while they were working on jobs for Mid-Continent Specialists.

All of those arrested were deported to Mexico, except Hernandez-Bautista. He posted a \$3,000 bond and changed his immigration status to a lawful permanent resident.

Soon after, the indictment alleges, Evans and his company paid \$11,000 to Hernandez-Bautista to smuggle the deported workers back into the United States.

John Wood, U.S. Attorney for the western district of Missouri, said the investigation started when prosecutors noticed financial irregularities, but he did not elaborate further.

Pete Baird, assistant special agent for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said the indictment was significant for the number of people involved and amount of money allegedly laundered.

"Today's arrests should put businesses on notice that ICE will criminally charge those employers who knowingly transport and employ illegal aliens as part of their business model," Baird said.

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