



U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

News Release

January 26, 2011

Contact: Chuck Jackson
Public Affairs Officer
(617)-565-7388

First Massachusetts business partners with ICE, joins "IMAGE" program

Aetna Fire Alarm Service Company, Inc. partners with ICE to ensure legal status of workforce

BOSTON – A Massachusetts company has signed the state's first-ever agreement with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to strengthen hiring practices and to combat the unlawful employment of illegal aliens.

"IMAGE" or "ICE Mutual Agreement between Government and Employers" is a voluntary program that allows private industry to partner with ICE to reduce unauthorized employment and the use of fraudulent identity documents.

Aetna Fire Alarm Service Company, Inc. of Dorchester, Massachusetts has been servicing the life safety needs of businesses in the Boston area since 1974, providing quality service with system technicians and electricians that are fully licensed through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Additionally, Aetna is a signatory member of Local 103 I.B.E.W. (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers) and National Electrical Contractors Association.

"This partnership enables ICE to recognize the highest level of employment integrity that promotes a healthy, safe, and productive work environment that can only be achieved with the cooperation of the entire business community," said Bruce M. Foucart, special agent in charge of ICE's Homeland Security Investigations in Boston. "Aetna Fire Alarm Service Company joins IMAGE business participants around the country who are committed to protecting the integrity of their workforce by helping to ensure that their employees are lawfully represented."

To qualify for IMAGE certification, Aetna performed the following requirements:

- Conducted self-assessments of their hiring practices to uncover vulnerabilities that could be exploited by illegal aliens;
- Enrolled in employment eligibility verification programs, such as E-Verify and the Social Security Number Verification Service;
- Trained their staffs on IMAGE Best Practices and how to use the new screening tools;
- Underwent a Form I-9 audit conducted by ICE.

"We are committed to ensuring that those who work for us are here legally," said Kathleen Guinee, owner of Aetna. "We hope this sends a message to other Massachusetts companies to follow our lead. We are proud to take the lead to help ensure that those who are lawfully in the country aren't competing with those who are here unlawfully and working for fewer wages and benefits than what they're entitled to."

Undocumented workers create vulnerabilities in today's marketplace by presenting false documents to gain employment, completing applications for fraudulent benefits, and stealing identities of legal United States workers. To combat this, ICE initiated the IMAGE program in 2006.

All IMAGE members must participate in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) E-Verify employment eligibility verification program. Through this program, employers can verify that newly hired employees are eligible to work in the United States. This Internet-based system is available throughout the nation and is free to employers. It provides an automated link to the Social Security Administration database and DHS immigration records.

Upon enrollment in and commitment to the IMAGE Best Employment Practices, program participants are deemed "IMAGE certified," a distinction DHS and ICE believe will become an industry standard. IMAGE also provides to all employers free training on the Form I-9, fraudulent document detection, and building a solid immigration compliance model.

Companies interested in more information on the IMAGE program can call the ICE office in Boston at (617) 565-6286, or visit www.ICE.gov/image.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities. For more information, visit: www.ICE.gov. To report suspicious activity, call 1-866-347-2423.