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Courtesy of Christine Salas

In an image from video, Jose Castillo is detained by U.S. Border Patrol officers at the Florin Road Home Depot in south Sacramento on Thursday. Castillo's wife Andrea said he is a U.S. citizen who was recording the actions of the masked federal agents.

## Masked immigration agents arrest 12 at Home Depot

BY ROSALIO AHUMADA, MATHEW MIRANDA AND STEPHEN HOBBS  
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Masked federal immigration agents arrested 12 people, including at least one U.S. citizen, Thursday morning from the parking lot of a Home Depot store in south Sacramento — marking the first high-profile enforcement raid in the county.

The incident, which was led by the U.S. Border Patrol and featured a Fox News camera crew, was reported about 8 a.m. at the Home Depot at 4641 Florin Rd., just west of Highway 99. Masked agents from the Border Patrol El Centro Sector arrived at the parking lot and began “grabbing people and putting them into vehicles,” according to the radio traffic from Sacramento County Sheriff’s Office.

David Kim, assistant chief patrol agent of the U.S. Border

Patrol El Centro Sector, confirmed in a written statement to The Bee that the morning operation led to the arrests of 11 undocumented immigrants and one U.S. citizen. He alleged that the U.S. citizen was “obstructing/impeding federal officers and vandalism of government property.”

Agents from El Centro Sector, near the Mexico border, carried out a three-day operation earlier this year in Kern County and have made headlines in recent months for numerous arrests in the Los Angeles area. In January, the Border Patrol El Centro Sector said it was “planning operations for other locals such as Fresno and especially Sacramento” in a Facebook comment.

Kim said on Thursday enforcement “should be expected” when asked if operations would continue in Sacramento. “Enforcement anywhere in

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## Border Patrol raid fuels push for immigration officer reform

BY LIA RUSSELL  
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The arrests of 12 people — including a U.S. citizen — by masked and armed Border Patrol agents at a Sacramento Home Depot on Thursday have added new urgency for state lawmakers to respond as the Central Valley and Northern California have been drawn into the Trump administration’s immigration crackdown after previously escaping federal attention.

State Sens. Sasha Renée Pérez, D-Alhambra, and Scott Wiener, D-San Francisco, are carrying bills that would

require federal agents to identify themselves and bar them from donning masks to obscure their faces when interacting with the public. Thursday’s raid has added new pressure for the Legislature to pass Senate Bill 805 and Senate Bill 627, as reports of masked, anonymous agents (and sometimes, self-deputized impostors) storming California neighborhoods in search of undocumented residents have proliferated in recent months.

At the federal level, Sen. Alex Padilla, D-Calif., who was briefly handcuffed last month after confronting Homeland

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## New Sacramento hub RISE offers help for immigrants

BY STEPHEN HOBBS  
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Organizations that support immigrants in much of Northern California announced a new partnership Thursday, only hours after federal agents detained at least 12 people in south Sacramento.

“This is the opportunity for us all to join hands and support all of our community members,” said Jessie Mabry, CEO of Opening Doors, an organization that supports immigrants and refugees.

The timing was coincidental. But Mabry said creating the new group, the Sacramento Regional Immigration Support & Empowerment Hub, was in response to the Trump administration’s aggressive enforcement over the last six months.

“The reality is that the gap between the community’s need for high-quality pro bono immigration legal services, and the community’s need for information that can really be empowering to them, in terms of knowing their rights and

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Jessie Mabry, CEO of Opening Doors, speaks at a news conference for the newly formed Sacramento Regional Immigration Support & Empowerment Hub at Trinity Cathedral in Sacramento on Thursday. Opening Doors is a nonprofit that provides legal services to immigrants and is one of the leading organizers of RISE Hub.

## Esparto fireworks explosion sparks environmental concerns

BY ISHANI DESAI  
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The Yolo County Environmental Health Division and state agencies will analyze soil in valuable agricultural fields after a fireworks explosion earlier this month at an Esparto warehouse spewed toxic fumes on nearby crops.

The July 1 explosion killed seven people and leveled structures as fireworks burst into the air, sending black plumes across land that has grown almonds, mulberries, tomatoes and peppers.

Work to identify and remove hazardous materials began by clearing solid debris before testing the soil for contaminants, Yolo County spokesperson Laura Galindo said this week.

“At this time, evaluations are ongoing and no final determinations have been made,” Galindo wrote in an email.

Sensitive populations — such as pregnant women and children — could breathe in harmful particulate matter contained in smoke and suffer respiratory problems, said Jun Wu, a professor of environmental and occupational health at the Joe C. Wen School of Population & Public Health at University of California, Irvine.

Fireworks, however, also include perchlorate, which can have short-term or chronic effects on the thyroid gland, such as hypothyroidism, said Kim Van Meter, an associate professor of water systems science at Penn State. The condition limits thyroid hormones released into the bloodstream and can slow down a person’s functions, according to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive Kidney Disease.

Pregnant women and children are particularly vulnerable to perchlorate. An underactive thyroid gland can affect brain development for growing babies, according to Johns Hopkins medicine.

One of the fireworks companies at the site, Devastating Pyrotechnics, imported 750 pallets of perchlorate, according to previous Bee reporting.

Generally, firework smoke has inorganic matter, which is different from organic materials contained in wildfire smoke, Wu said. Common metals in fireworks include copper, potassium, strontium, barium, magnesium or aluminum to create the colors, she said.

There are very minimal effects if a person breathes in the perchlorate, Van Meter said. But chronic consequences can result if the chemical seeps into the groundwater and it is ingested, she said.

“It can stick around for a long time in groundwater,” she said. Soil does not strongly absorb perchlorate, Van Meter said. But perchlorate is easily dissolved in water, and can be taken in by crops. People eating this food may experience short-term health effects, Van Meter said.

The spread of chemicals contained in fireworks is unknown. A variety of factors such as wind speeds and different weather

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