

Threat by former worker reported;
TRIED TO EXTORT \$25,000, BUSINESS OWNER SAYS

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Body

The owner of a Palo Alto plumbing business has told police a former employee tried to extort \$25,000 from him.

David Bell said the employee quit last week, after working for about six months, then called two days later claiming to have a video that proved Bell employed undocumented workers.

Bell said all his employees have shown him working papers.

The employee who quit was surly and would arrive late and leave early, Bell said. Bell tolerated him because he could do the job.

Bell said the former employee left a message on his cell phone last week, then an unknown man called Monday and threatened his family and home. The second man also mentioned the video, Bell said.

Sgt. Scott Wong said police are investigating the blackmail allegation but aren't going to interview Bell's employees about their immigration status. "We don't have a concern who he has working for him," Wong said.

Immigration laws are enforced by the federal Department of Homeland Security and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

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