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Hancock property of Chicago union leader raided

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WASHINGTON COUNTY — Federal agents raided a buffalo farm and a gun shop in the Hancock area on Friday as part of an investigation into a man who leads a large union based in the Chicago area.

Ross Rice, an FBI spokesman in Chicago, said Chicago and Baltimore agents executed two search warrants - one at Dugan's Buffalo Farm on Reel Road, just outside the town, and the other at Dugan's Sports Center on Main Street.

Rice said no one was arrested or charged. He said he didn't know if anything was seized.

He would not say what the federal investigation was about.

The farm and the shop are owned by William Dugan, according to property records.

Dugan is president-business manager of Local 150 of the International Union of Operating Engineers.

A Chicago Sun-Times story about the raid says the FBI and the U.S. Labor Department have been investigating whether Dugan "illegally used union resources to truck corn from Illinois to his buffalo farm, where he raises the animals."

The Sun-Times' story says that last summer, when the investigation became publicly known through the paper's coverage, Dugan "vehemently denied any wrongdoing."

Dugan couldn't be reached for comment Monday.

Someone who answered the phone at the buffalo farm said he was in Chicago.

Later in the day, James Sweeney, Local 150's vice president, said Dugan was on his way back to Maryland.

Sweeney said allegations about Dugan stem from Local 150's contentious election about a year ago.

Dugan paid for the equipment and the fuel used in transporting the corn, Sweeney said.

Asked why Dugan was having corn hauled from Illinois to Hancock, Sweeney said, "He feeds the deer."

In a separate investigation conducted for Local 150, a retired federal prosecutor found nothing wrong, Sweeney said.

Sweeney said Dugan grew up in Hancock, went to the Chicago area after the Korean War with about \$20 and "worked his way up."

Dugan's profile at Local 150's Web site says he became an operating engineer in 1955 and was elected president-business manager in 1986.

Sweeney said the local has 23,000 members in Indiana, Illinois and Iowa.

Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation records show that William and Dorothy Dugan own the Reel Road property that houses the buffalo farm. That property is listed as their mailing address,

too.

William Dugan owns the Main Street property on which Dugan's Sports Center is situated. For that property, he's listed as having a Mount Prospect, Ill., mailing address.

A message left at Dugan's Sports Center on Monday wasn't returned.

Two phone numbers listed in an online directory for William Dugan in Mount Prospect had been disconnected.

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