

This is a printer friendly version of an article from the **Daily Record**  
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back](#)

---

03/13/07 - Posted from the Daily Record newsroom

Advertisement

## **Morristown to US: Deputize our cops**

### **Mayor wants local police to be able to conduct immigration inspections**

MORRISTOWN (AP) -- Morristown officials, beset by complaints about immigrants gathering for day labor and living in crowded homes, want their police force to have the authority to check the immigration status of people in the city.

The town has applied for a program in which local police get that authority, along with the power to bring civil immigration charges that are handled in federal immigration court.

If accepted, Morristown could be the first town in New Jersey in the program by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency.

The application was submitted Friday, Councilman Dick Tighe said.

Ten law enforcement agencies are in the program, created by a federal law enacted in 1996. Immigration officials said they have had recent inquiries from nearly 50 agencies.

Immigrations and customs spokesman Michael Gilhooley said police officers get five weeks of training.

An immigrant rights advocate, however, said the program and the threat of deportation could intimidate illegal immigrants who are victims or witnesses of a crime.

"To strike fear of adverse immigration consequences, that's going to build silence and it's going to make communities less safe," Elissa Steglich, a lawyer with the American Friends Service Committee in Newark, told the newspaper.

The 2000 Census found that nearly one-third of the town's 18,544 residents were born in other countries, but does not give a figure of how many may be illegal.

---