

OUR TOWNS

UPPER BROOKVILLE

★ Trench collapse workers ID'd

Village, OSHA are reviewing permits, worksite

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The workers who died at an Upper Brookville construction site were identified by police on Thursday, while village officials are reviewing building permits for the property where a supporting trench wall collapsed.

The deceased men are Deniz Dos Santos Almeida, 57, and Max Antonio Turcios, 46. Nassau police, who had earlier said

one of the victims was 45, did not release their hometowns.

Upper Brookville Mayor Elliot Conway said Thursday officials were rechecking building permits for construction of a home on Wolver Hollow Road near Pine Valley Road, the property where the men died after being buried under a five-to-seven foot wall of mud and sand after the 30-foot trench collapsed during installation of a septic tank.

"We are looking through the building permit documents, we want to be sure everything was appropriately done," he said.

As of Thursday afternoon, the mayor had not seen the permit paperwork detailing construction of the home and its amenities, Conway said. He noted that

village building inspectors rely on third-party certification for installing a septic tank.

"It's a tragic accident," Conway said. "Our condolences go out to the families of the two victims."

Also Thursday, Ted Fitzgerald, a spokesman for the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration, said in a statement an investigation into the trench collapse was opened Tuesday to determine if there were any worksite violations. OSHA is investigating employer RC Structures Inc. based in Roslyn, Fitzgerald said.

"The purpose of an OSHA inspection is to determine whether or not there have been any violations of OSHA safety and

health standards," he said. "OSHA has up to six months to complete an inspection."

A woman who answered the phone at RC Structures Thursday declined to comment. The company's website says it "has been responsible for the construction of dozens of mid to high rise projects," among them multimillion-dollar skyscrapers.

Nassau County police homicide detectives are coleading the investigation with OSHA, officials said.

Police said they recovered the body of the younger victim from the pit Tuesday. But, emergency responders had to return to the scene Wednesday in a recovery operation that included securing unstable piles of sand

and soil, which were then removed with buckets before the second man's body was pulled from the hole, officials said.

Conway lauded heroic efforts of first responders, drawing police and firefighters from more than 10 departments, who risked their lives and limbs following the collapse shortly before sunset. He especially praised the officers from Old Brookville police and Nassau's Emergency Service unit, who jumped into the pit, using their bare hands and shovels while desperately trying to rescue the men.

Conway said he has spoken to the property owner multiple times and "he is distraught." No one connected to the property could be reached Thursday.