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# Daily Pilot

Newport Beach and Costa Mesa, California

## Forecast



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## TOP STORIES

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### Construction worker dies after 80-foot fall

• Subcontractor was erecting scaffolding inside the future Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall building.

By Marisa O'Neil and Elia Powers, Daily Pilot

COSTA MESA -- A construction worker died Wednesday morning after falling some 80 feet at a building site at the Orange County Performing Arts Center.

The worker, a subcontractor from Aluma Systems, fell as he was erecting scaffolding inside the Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, building manager Darrell Waters said. Orange County coroners identified him as Jorge Bazan, 48, of Redondo Beach.

Bazan suffered two broken elbows and was conscious and alert when paramedics responded at about 8:30 a.m. but went into full cardiac arrest as he was taken to the hospital, Costa Mesa fire Battalion Chief Keith Fujimoto said.

Doctors at Western Medical Center in Santa Ana managed to get a pulse and blood pressure from him for a short time, Fujimoto said. He was pronounced dead at 9:30 a.m., Orange County Supervising Deputy Coroner Rod Thomas said.

Bazan was wearing a harness at the time, but the scaffolding it was secured to collapsed beneath him, Fujimoto said.

"Everything came down with him,"



Fujimoto said.

A second worker also fell from a platform and was briefly left dangling, Fujimoto said. Other construction workers hoisted him to safety before firefighters arrived, Fujimoto said.

That second worker, described only as a Los Angeles resident in his late 30s, was taken to Coastal Communities Hospital for a precautionary checkup, Fujimoto said.

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Both workers were wearing proper safety gear at the time of the accident, Waters said.

The construction site was closed shortly after the accident, and the usual sound of banging beams was replaced by an eerie silence.

Clutching their coolers, dozens of stoic workers left the site less than an hour after the incident so inspectors could "take a look and get the facts," Waters said.

Inspectors from Cal/OSHA responded to the scene Wednesday morning.

Members of the Costa Mesa fire department's Trauma Intervention Program, also responded, Fujimoto said.

About 15 construction workers who were friends of Bazan, or who were near him during the accident, remained in a trailer to answer questions, write witness reports and speak with counselors.

Fujimoto and Waters notified the workers of the death less than two hours after the incident.

"They knew he had a significant injury, and they knew he was hurt badly," Fujimoto said. "They [the co-workers] knew each other well and hadn't had something like this happen before."

The 2,000-seat Renee and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall and 500-seat Samueli Theater are part of the Orange County Performing Arts Center's expansion and are due to open in fall 2006.

Construction of the new buildings is past the halfway point. The center already has released the performance schedule for the inaugural season in Segerstrom Concert Hall.

Nearly \$130 million of the target \$200 million has been raised for the new facilities. It is not yet clear whether Wednesday's incident will delay construction of the concert hall.

"We are saddened by the death of a construction worker this morning at the concert hall site and extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to his family," Todd Bentjen, the center's vice president of marketing and communication, said in a written statement.

"There is a multi-agency investigation currently underway."