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Crane Crushes Sidewalk Shed

No injuries reported at Columbus Square construction site

By Dan Rivoli

October 8, 2009

A crane accident on the afternoon of Oct. 8 partly crushed scaffolding that covers a pedestrian walkway at the northeast corner of Columbus Avenue and West 97th Street.

Department of Buildings spokesperson Ryan Fitzgibbon said it was not a major accident and there were no reported injuries. The incident occurred, she said, as workers were dismantling the crane, at 775 Columbus Ave., and a counterweight fell, damaging the sidewalk shed. The 13-story, mixed-use building was under construction and is stable, according to Fitzgibbon.

The department issued a full stop work order for the crane, and issued Environmental Control Board violations to the crane's owner, crane operator and the site's general contractor for failing to safeguard the public and property affected by construction operations. Work on site is continuing, however.

The crane was working on Joe Chetrit's Columbus Square project, consisting of five luxury rentals and retail space at Park West Village, along Columbus Avenue between West 97th and 100th streets. Police, firemen and Building Department personnel were on the scene this afternoon, directly across from the new Whole Foods. As of 5 p.m. that day, workers were in the process of removing the crane, owned by U.S. Crane and Rigging. Atlantic Hoisting and Scaffolding, which owns the sidewalk shed, was also making repairs.



Photo by Andrew Schwartz

David Fuhrman, who lives on the 15th floor of 382 Central Park West, said he had filed two complaints

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about the crane with the department, starting on Oct. 5, before this afternoon's accident.

"The crane operator should not be operating this crane," he said. "It pisses me off. It could have been my building."

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