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PROBE INTO FATAL TRENCH ACCIDENT IN QUEEN CREEK PUT AT 3 MONTHS

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The investigation into a fatal accident Thursday at a Queen Creek construction site will likely take three months to complete, one official says.

Darin Perkins, director of the Arizona Division of Occupational Safety and Health, said his department is investigating the accident that occurred while employees of S.J.L. Construction of Arizona were laying pipe at the site of future shopping center near Rittenhouse and Ellsworth roads.

According to officials on the scene, last Thursday's accident occurred while two workers in an open trench were inside an 8 to 10 foot section of corrugated pipe, which was crushed by collapsing dirt.

One worker made it out with minor injuries, but Marcos Garcia, 25, of Mesa was killed. The day before the fatality a similar cave-in occurred, but no one was injured.

"Prior to the (fatality) we had no knowledge of it, but we are looking into that as well," Perkins said.

The home office of **S.J. Louis** Construction in Waite Park, Minn. released a statement about Garcia's death and the investigation.

"The incident is currently under investigation. We are looking at all possible causes and factors of this tragic accident," the statement reads.

In addition to the incident last week, Perkins said S.J.L. was cited in April after a complaint for "failing to adequately protect an excavation from collapse."

"They had sloped out the sides of the excavation ... they just didn't do it at the angle that

is required by our standards," said Perkins, who said the complaint was classified as "non-serious."

Perkins said accidents resulting in a fatality can take several months to complete before information can be released to the public.

Deputy Doug Matteson of the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office confirmed the office is working on an investigation into cause of death, but OSHA is handling the actual accident investigation.