

Building collapse injures 4

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According to carpenter John Atkins, one minute the carpenters were installing the last truss to the 60-foot-by-80-foot warehouse, and the next minute it was tumbling down.

"I heard a crack, and then everything just fell in the middle — like dominoes," said Atkins of the 12:30 p.m. incident.

"Then I heard somebody holler, 'Watch out, watch out.'"

"Then crash."

"Afterward everybody was shouting for each other."

"We did a head count and realized Bill was trapped."

"He was moaning."

"We tried to get some of the load off him with the crane; then we tried to free him but no luck," Atkins said.

"Everybody was running around, hauling lumber off him," said carpenter Melvin Brown.

"It was no use," he said.

Fire and rescue workers eventually freed William Shoner from the several hundred pounds of beams.

"I have never seen anything like this in my 37 years in the business," Brown said as he looked at the remains of what had been two weeks' work.

Still shocked, other workers hovered near the brick building looking at the heap of lumber that lay on the concrete.

ProCon Construction, now operating out of a small shed adjacent to the new structure, was expected to move into the facility in a month, said Cherry Hill



Courier-Post photo by Curt Hudson

Helping injured: Rescue workers tend to two workers injured yesterday in a Cherry Hill construction accident. A total of four workers were injured. One remained in critical condition.

Patrolman Terry Montana.

"This is just a terrible day," said Brown, of Camden. "It could have been me that they took away in the ambulance."

"I'm sure I won't forget this day for a long time," he said.

Construction workers say the wind caused the structure to collapse, and Anthony Saccomanno, director of building inspection and

code enforcement, agreed.

"This kind of incident is not uncommon at construction sites," he said.

"We will be investigating, but it's feasible that the wind can be blamed for this."

"I'm sure we will find out it was an unfortunate accident."

"It doesn't take too much for this kind of thing to happen."