

2 boys die in cave-in at sand pile

EAST NORTHPORT, L.I. (UPI) — Two 13-year-old boys were buried alive yesterday and four others escaped injury when a 100-foot high sandpile they were playing on caved in, Suffolk County police reported.

Police said the victims, Thomas Philbin and Robert Quinn, who lived next door to each other on Vine Lane in East Northport, L.I., were killed when a sandpile at the Huntington Town Dump in East Northport collapsed on them.

Detectives said Robert's 10-year-old brother, James, was buried chest deep when the sand suddenly shifted but managed to extricate himself.

Three other boys also escaped injury.

According to detectives, the boys rode their bicycles to the dump around noon to go "foot-skiing" down the towering sand pile.

The youths had all slid down once, police said, but when four of the boys climbed back to the top, the sand caved in and engulfed Robert and Thomas, who had climbed about 20 feet up the pile.

The frightened survivors summoned a gateman at the dump who alerted police.

Police, local volunteer firemen and town employes, using a crane and two sand digging payloaders quickly began rescue operations.

Half an hour after the cave in, they recovered one of the bodies under about three feet of sand but the other victim was buried under about 10 feet of sand and it took nearly three hours to uncover his body.

Police said the dump is protected by a fence on the town line road side, but there are no barriers on the other three sides.

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Oct 21, 2024