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Contractor is charged with deadly accident

Brooklyn D.A. says amateur's shoddy work amounts to homicide

ANDREW GARIB
letters@metro.us



William Lattarulo told his workers not to worry when the building began to shake, but now the contractor who allegedly cut corners at an East New York job site is facing manslaughter charges in the crushing death of a 30-year-old worker.

Lattarulo, 63, of Long Island was charged yesterday with manslaughter in the second de-

"This was a step-by-step guide on how not to dig a foundation."

Rose Gill Hearn, Department of Investigations

gree, criminally negligent homicide and reckless endangerment for ignoring the building code and overseeing shoddy work that allegedly led to the March 12 wall collapse that killed Lauro Ortega, Brooklyn District Attorney Charles J. Hynes said. "This is an example of greed leading to the unthinkable," Hynes said.

Lattarulo, who had no construction or engineering experience, saved \$90,000 by hiring \$100-a-day laborers, including Ortega, instead of an experienced construction company to build a laundromat. Lattarulo ignored warnings from workers and a construction consultant about properly supporting the wall of an adjacent

building while digging the foundation for the laundromat the district attorney said.

Hynes also said before the wall collapsed and fatally buried Ortega, Lattarulo told workers not to worry when they complained that the building was shaking.

"Today's indictment serves as a warning that there are serious consequences for cutting corners by ignoring safety regulations," acting Buildings Commissioner Robert LiMandri said in a release.

Lattarulo faces five to 15 years in jail if convicted.