2 dead, 6 injured in Calif. quarry shooting

BROOKE DONALD - Associated Press - Associated Press

Authorities searched Wednesday for a disgruntled employee who they say opened fire at a Northern California limestone quarry, killing two and wounding six, and who may have later shot a woman in an attempted carjacking.

The suspect, 45-year-old Shareef Allman, allegedly walked into a safety meeting at the quarry at about 4 a.m. with a handgun and rifle and started shooting, Santa Clara County sheriff's spokesman Jose Cardoza said.

He then left the meeting and began walking around the grounds before fleeing the quarry, in the Cupertino foothills about 15 miles west of San Jose.

"He is armed and dangerous and on the loose," Cardoza said.

Two of the victims were being treated at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, where they were in good and fair condition, hospital spokeswoman Joy Alexiou said. Their names and the extent of their wounds were not immediately released.

One victim was taken to the emergency room at Stanford University Medical Center in Palo Alto, but the hospital could release no other details, spokeswoman Paula Zimlicki said.

Later in the morning, a woman was shot in an attempted carjacking near Hewlett-Packard Co.'s Cupertino campus by a man matching the description of the quarry gunman, authorities said. The shooter then fled on foot.

The woman was taken to the hospital in unknown condition.

The suspect used a weapon similar to the gun used in the quarry shooting, Cardoza said.

Sheriff's deputies cordoned off a wide area and were checking the trunks of cars coming down the road leading up to the quarry. Family members of workers and possible victims gathered anxiously along the police tape awaiting news of their loved ones.

One of them, a woman who asked to remain anonymous because the gunman was still at large, said her father worked at the quarry for about 10 years and was the lead employee on the night shift.

She said he called his family around 4:30 a.m. to say something was happening and not to pick him up. He called again just after 6 a.m. to say he was OK but was hiding.

He called a third time to say he was coming out, but authorities appeared to be keeping workers behind the perimeter as the search continued, the daughter said.

"It was so hard not knowing what was happening," said said.

The Permanente Quarry is a limestone and aggregate mining operation and cement plant owned by Lehigh Southwest Cement. The quarry was issued its first permit in May 1939, according to Santa Clara County documents.

The site has been subject to a number of environmental violations over the years, and has been subject to noise and other complaints from residents who live nearby.

Lehigh Southwest Cement Company makes about 1.2 million tons of cement per year, and its products are involved in a number of major construction projects including the seismic upgrades to the Golden Gate Bridge.

The company did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

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