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FYI

UNION AGREES TO PACT

By [JOSEPH DE AVILA](#)

Concrete laborers who had refused to work at the World Trade Center for three days returned to the job Thursday after their union reached a deal with contractors the night before.

But labor turmoil at the World Trade Center is not over: Another clash looms with the carpenters union—which voted to authorize a strike Wednesday.

The Cement League, a contractors' association that represents management, and the Cement and Concrete Workers District Council, representing concrete workers, agreed late Wednesday night to extend a contract until Aug. 16. Both declined to comment.

Talks will resume Friday, said Louis Coletti, president of the Building Trades Employers' Association, a management umbrella group. "I think it's a good thing. That means they will continue to talk and hopefully find a way to resolve it," he said.

Meanwhile, the union that represents about 22,000 carpenters voted on Wednesday night to authorize a strike if they don't reach a deal with management by Friday, when their contract extension ends.

"You can't stop it," said Steven Spinola, president of the Real Estate Board of New York, regarding a strike by the carpenters. "If it does happen, I don't think it will be broad-based."

A spokesman with the federally monitored New York City District Council of Carpenters said progress was being made and an agreement was possible.

Carpenters are negotiating with several contractor groups, including the Cement League.

Carpenters joined hundreds of cement workers earlier this week at a work stoppage that began Monday. The job action affected work at One and Two World Trade Center, its downtown transit hub, the new Barclays Center, Madison Square Garden, Weill Cornell Medical Center and a residential development on 57th Street.

A labor arbitrator ordered some of those workers back to their jobs on Tuesday and Wednesday because their project labor agreements had no-strike provisions. But concrete workers at One World Trade Center and its 800,000-square-foot transit hub had no such agreement and threatened to remain off the job until they had a contract.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey confirmed Thursday that the workers had returned to their jobs.

The main dispute is over contractors' insistence that concrete workers accept 20% less in wages and benefits for residential and hotel construction relative to commercial construction. The union has refused to give in on that demand so far.

Patrick Keane, a concrete laborer from New Windsor, N.Y., said he is afraid that \$200, or 20%, is going to be plucked from his weekly wages. "Allow us to live and allow us to live decently," he said. "It's another basic right—we're not looking to break anybody."

—*Alison Fox contributed to this article.*