Two Divers Die in California Aqueduct



An investigation is under way to determine what caused two California Department of Water Resources divers to die during a routine inspection of pump intake pipes in the California Aqueduct.

Divers Tim Crawford, 56, and Martin Alvarado, 44, failed to surface from what was expected to be a 20-minute job in murky, fast-moving water at the Dos Amigos Pumping Plant near Los Banos in Merced County.

A search was conducted when they failed to surface. The two divers were tethered together and their bodies were recovered from about 30 feet of water.

Department Director Lester Snow said water resources divers routinely perform hazardous duties but they are well trained, highly qualified and have a safety-first attitude. A sheriff’s department spokesman said water speeds in the area where the men died are fast enough to move large objects such as logs or cars through the aqueduct.