



NEWS RELEASE

08-131

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HOW TO SAVE A LIFE

Inland Empire – Did you know that eighty-five percent of those killed in work zones are drivers or occupants? Caltrans is participating in the Ninth Annual National Work Zone Awareness Week beginning April 7th, 2008. All Caltrans employees will be required to go through at least two hours of safety training. A Caltrans worker memorial ceremony for those killed in the line of duty will be held on Tuesday, April 8th at the State Capitol at 11:00 a.m.

The [“Slow for the Cone Zone”](#) slogan and campaign is not only for our workers safety – but is for the public’s benefit, too. The following Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) facts may shock you:

- Over the last ten years, the annual number of persons killed nationwide in motor vehicle crashes in work zones has increased 45 percent (up to 1,010 in 2006).
- On average from 2002 to 2006 about 15 percent of the fatalities resulting from crashes in work zones were non-motorists (pedestrians, including workers and bicyclists).
- More than 40,000 people are injured each year nationwide as a result of motor vehicle crashes in work zones.
- Approximately half of all fatal work zone crashes occurred during the day.
- More than twice as many fatal work zone crashes occurred on weekdays as on weekends.
- Fatal work zone crashes occurred most often in the summer and the fall.
- There is one work zone fatality every 8.7 hours (almost 3 a day) and one work zone injury every 9 minutes (160 a day).

Following are ten tips for driving in work zones:

- **Expect the unexpected!** Normal speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be changed, and people may be working on or near the road.
- **SLOW DOWN!** Speeding is one of the major causes of work zone crashes.
- **Don’t tailgate** – Keep a safe distance between your car and the car ahead of you. The most common type of collision in work zones is a rear end collision.

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- **Keep a safe distance between you and the construction equipment and workers.**
- **Pay attention to the signs!** The warning signs are there to help you and other drivers move safely through the work zone. Observe the signs until you leave the work zone.
- **Obey road crew flaggers!** The flagger knows what is best for moving traffic safely in the work zone. A flagger has the same authority as a regulatory sign, so you can be cited for disobeying his or her directions. Hitting or injuring a flagger can result in legal action against you.
- **Stay alert and minimize distractions.** Dedicate your full attention to the roadway and do not talk on the phone, change the radio station, or talk to your occupants.
- **Keep up with the traffic flow.** Motorists can help maintain traffic flow and posted speeds by merging smoothly, and not slowing to “gawk” at road work equipment and crews.
- Schedule enough time to drive safely and check radio, television, and websites for traffic information. You can go to our website at www.caltrans8.info for roadwork information.
- **Be patient and stay calm.** Work zones aren't there to personally inconvenience you. Remember, the work zone crew members are working to improve the road and make your future drive a better one!

For more information go to www.workzonesafety.org or www.dot.ca.gov/hq/conezone.

In memory of Caltrans District 8 fallen workers:

John Knabenbauer 2007
Thomas Ortega 1995
Robert Wheeler 1982
Theodore Hembree 1972
Nelson Peck 1958
Frank Post 1948

Linda Sutton 2001
Michael Magana 1995
Charles Rorabough 1972
Evan Bower 1964
Warren Anderson 1954
A. Achtert 1924

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