



# NEWS RELEASE

**Today's Date:** April 21, 2016  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# CALTRANS WORKER'S MEMORIAL PAYS TRIBUTE TO 184 EMPLOYEES

*Caltrans 26<sup>th</sup> annual ceremony honors employees who have died in the line of duty*

**Bishop** – The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will hold its annual Workers' Memorial Ceremony on Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at the Caltrans District 9 Office. This ceremony will be held in coordination with Caltrans Safety Awareness Week. The event is open to the public, and Caltrans would like to encourage everyone to attend.

The Caltrans Workers Memorial is a time to remember employees who have lost their lives building, maintaining, and operating California's world-class transportation system. Since 1921, a total of 184 Caltrans workers have died in the line of duty, including Oscar Vargas in District 11 who was killed this past year.

"Thousands of people report for work every day braving the hazards on busy highways, roadways and bridges across California," said Caltrans District 9 Director Brent Green. "This memorial is a solemn reminder to us all that we each must do our part to keep California's roadways safe for everyone."

The ceremony will feature a temporary memorial of 19 orange safety cones: 7 to honor each of District 9's employees that have lost their lives while on duty and 12 representing Caltrans Districts around the state.

Speakers will include Brent Green - Caltrans District 9 Director, Captain Tim Noyes - California Highway Patrol, Joe Pecsí – City of Bishop Major Pro Tem, and Dave Batchelder – Caltrans D9 Maintenance Supervisor for the Desert Region.

The McGee maintenance station crew has the honor of conducting the presentation of remembrance as the Caltrans District 9 Color Guard. They will place memorial ribbons on each of the cones to honor the fallen employees who have made the ultimate sacrifice.





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Highway construction and maintenance work is one of the most dangerous occupations in the United States. In addition to the danger workers face, an estimated 85 to 90 percent of people who are killed in highway work zones are drivers and passengers. Most of these fatalities are caused by rear-end collisions, with speeding, distracted and aggressive driving the most common causes.

“Caltrans and highway workers call on the public to do their part to help keep our roadways safe for everyone,” continued Dougherty.

Caltrans and highway workers take continuous measures to ensure safety, such as participating in training, updating equipment and alerting motorists in advance of highway work zones. For example, Caltrans has taken steps to further improve the visibility of employees and trucks by increasing the reflectivity of worker clothing and striping on the trucks. But drivers can dramatically improve safety in work zones by slowing down, reducing distractions such as talking on the phone or texting and dedicating all attention to the roadway. Motorists are also required by state law to move over a lane when safe to do so when approaching a highway worker’s vehicle or other emergency response vehicles with flashing amber lights.

Following the success of California’s “Slow for the Cone Zone” public awareness campaign, Caltrans launched the “Be Work Zone Alert” campaign in 2014. The campaign uses the children of actual Caltrans workers as spokespeople, underscoring the real human tragedy that happens when a highway worker is injured or killed. In addition to billboards that have been up statewide, the campaign also launched the “Be Work Zone Alert” television spot to educate and encourage drivers to Slow for the Cone Zone and move over for emergency vehicles. The spot can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/qN24M5IGNmE>

Caltrans has partnered with the California Transportation Foundation to develop two funds to benefit the families of Caltrans workers killed on the job. The Fallen Workers Assistance and Memorial Fund helps with the initial needs a surviving family faces and the Caltrans Fallen Workers Memorial Scholarship is available to the children of these workers. For more information or to make donations, visit [www.transportationfoundation.org](http://www.transportationfoundation.org).

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Be Work Zone Alert





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Images from Caltrans 2015 Workers Memorial:  
Gary Goodner, Caltrans maintenance crew member places a memorial ribbon over a



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cone to honor the employees that have given the ultimate sacrifice.  
Below: Bishop California Highway Patrol officers, and Caltrans employees attending the Workers Memorial.



Color Guard, VFW Post 8988, and Sweet Adelines.

District 9 Director Brent Green speaks in front of the temporary memorial of orange cones with the Caltrans

