

News Release



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District: 05 – Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties
Contact: Ashton Harris or Kevin Drabinski
Phone: (805) 556-5820 or (805) 549-3138

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALTRANS DISTRICT 5 HONORS LOCAL FALLEN HIGHWAY WORKERS AT 36TH ANNUAL MEMORIAL CEREMONY

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY – Caltrans District 5 held its 36th Annual Workers Memorial Ceremony on the front lawn of the District Office at 50 Higuera Street in San Luis Obispo Wednesday morning.

Since 1921, 195 Caltrans employees have been killed on the job, including eight in District 5. Employees, along with dignitaries and families of the local fallen workers honored the lives lost while also emphasizing road safety.



“Today we honor and pay tribute to the members of the Caltrans family who have been killed while serving the people of California,” said Caltrans District 5 Director, Scott Eades. “The Fallen Workers Memorial is also a chance to ask the travelling public to adjust their driving habits so as to continue to see our crews as real people who need to get home to their families.”



During the ceremony, Caltrans used its signature orange cones, each bearing a black stripe containing the name of a local employee who died on duty. Speakers included Former District 5 Chief Deputy Director, Tony Harris, District 5 Director, Scott Eades, CHP Coastal Division Assistant Chief, Kyle Foster, and District 5 Deputy Director of Maintenance and Traffic, Aaron Henkel.

One of the biggest hazards for workers is motorists who do not exercise caution while driving through highway work zones. Events like these reaffirm the department’s vision of reaching zero fatalities and serious injuries on state highways by 2050.

“It’s unbelievable what our workers go through every day, and safety is something that will always be important and is always something we should remember,” said former District 5 Chief Deputy Director, Tony Harris. “We should remember those who unfortunately did not get to go home, and remember their family, their friends and always be there to support them.”

The memorial commemoration also included a rose laying ceremony over a rock with a plaque naming the eight local workers who have died while in the line of duty.

Caltrans wants to remind everyone to “Be Work Zone Alert.” April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, a reminder to recognize risky driving behaviors and build safer habits that can help prevent serious crashes. In April, Caltrans is sharing safety messages on more than 170 billboards statewide to honor the sacrifices of highway workers.

In Memory of:

- Michael (Flea) Feliciano, 2004
- Manuel Leon, 1998
- Thomas Sanders, 1991
- Donna Patarak, 1979
- Harvey Huss, 1973
- Kyle Truesdale, 1952
- Albert Castro, 1931
- Norman Hamilton, 1931



To access coverage material including b-roll, video clips, soundbites and photos, please email ashton.harris@dot.ca.gov.

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