



IUOE California State Unit 12 Influence on Caltrans Worker Safety Public Awareness

According to the Federal Highway Administration, in 2008 alone, there were 720 work zone fatalities nationally. In addition, there have been over 40,000 injuries in work zones. Due to this the Operating Engineers have taken the following actions:

- In 1990, the first Caltrans Workers Memorial was held and they have been held every year since then.
- In 2002, SRC 105, authored by John Burton, was passed; which dedicated the bridge that links interstate 80 in Sacramento as the Caltrans Maintenance Worker Memorial Bridge. This was the first time ever that the state memorialized the death of Caltrans workers, either with highway markers or dedications. This was our first step toward raising public awareness for road worker safety.
- Also in 2002, SB 1984, authored by Soto, was signed into law. This bill, for the first time, gave enhanced industrial disability and death benefits to members of State Bargaining Unit 12 who were injured or killed in the course of their duties. More specifically, this bill provided CalPERS industrial disability benefits, which is 50% of pay for life, for Caltrans Bargaining Unit 12 employees who are injured on the job. Additionally, this bill provided the CalPERS Special Death Benefit for Caltrans Bargaining Unit 12 workers who die as the result of an injury on the job.
- In 2005, at the request of the Operating Engineers, a memorial plaque was placed in Sacramento's Capitol Park.



- In 2008, SB 1509, authored by Alan Lowenthal and sponsored by the Operating Engineers, was signed into law. This bill focused on establishing and increasing the punishment for the assault and battery of highway workers. This bill established a new crime of battery against a specific type of person; a state highway worker. In more detail, this bill imposed a fine of no more than \$2,000, jail time of up to one year, or both when a state highway worker is put in danger by a motorist while on the job.
- In 2009, SB 240, authored by Rod Wright and sponsored by the Operating Engineers, was signed into law. This bill, known as the "Move Over Bill" requires motorists to safely move over one lane, or slow to a reasonable speed, when approaching a stationary marked Department of Transportation vehicle that is displaying its flashing amber warning lights.