

NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CALTRANS TO MOTORISTS: WHEN YOU SEE FLASHING LIGHTS, MOVE OVER TO PROTECT HIGHWAY WORKERS AND CHP OFFICERS

SACRAMENTO – Today, 700 Caltrans electronic highway signs throughout California lit up with a new Move Over message to kickoff a statewide campaign to increase safety for motorists, highway workers and law enforcement. The message, “Slow or Move Over for Workers, It’s the Law,” will stay posted through July 22. Caltrans will also begin a new billboard campaign and issue a public service announcement to television stations statewide reinforcing the Move Over message.

In May and June, three Caltrans highway workers died on the job within 48 days - the most in such a short period of time. Since 1924, 178 Caltrans workers have lost their lives in the line of duty.

“Our goal is to do everything we can to keep our highways safe,” said Acting Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty. “Motorists must slow down, watch out for highway workers, and safely move over a lane when they see flashing amber lights on Caltrans or other emergency vehicles.”

The joint safety effort by Caltrans, the California Highway Patrol (CHP), the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), and the California Office of Traffic Safety will educate the public on the importance of moving over a lane to protect highway workers and CHP officers.

The CHP will provide the Move Over safety message during their morning traffic updates on broadcast stations statewide, and officers will be on the lookout for motorists not following the law.

“This traffic safety campaign isn’t about writing citations, it’s about providing a safer work environment for everyone who does business along the side of a highway,” said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. “The only way to prevent tragedies from occurring on the side of the road is by giving emergency personnel, highway workers, and the public adequate space.”



The DMV will display the Move Over safety message on electronic signs in 135 field offices, and highlight the law in its handbook and written driver's test, where it will appear along with Slow for the Cone Zone information.

"Our collective goal is that motorists will become more attentive as they drive," said DMV Director George Valverde. "With continued cooperative efforts such as the Move Over campaign, we can further improve highway safety."

The departments will update their web sites and social media pages, such as Facebook® and Twitter®, to reinforce the Move Over message.

"When we see Caltrans, law enforcement, emergency medical services, tow trucks, and other emergency or construction vehicles next to the roadway, they are there for one purpose - our safety," said Christopher J. Murphy, Director for the California Office of Traffic Safety. "Let's keep them and ourselves safe by giving them plenty of room to operate."

The Move Over law, which took effect in 2007, was amended in 2009 to add Caltrans vehicles displaying flashing amber warning lights to the list of vehicles for which motorists must move over if safe to do so or slow down.

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