



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Worker Assistance Accounts in Place for Injured Bridge Workers

The California Transportation Foundation (CTF) has established worker assistance accounts for construction workers injured in a bridge lowering accident on October 9 over E. Grand Boulevard, as part of the 91 Freeway Project in Corona.

So far, accounts have been set up for James Chaffee, Jr. and Gilberto Ortiz. Donations can be made only to the accounts that are currently established. As additional worker accounts are created, the public will have the option to donate to those accounts. Donations can be made at www.transportationfoundation.org/donate. Donors should use the “Comments” box to indicate how they would like their contribution to be designated.

All contributions deposited into a worker’s account will be distributed to a contact person identified by the family. There are no limitations on how the money may be used by the family of each injured worker. CTF will match donations on a dollar-for-dollar basis, up to \$5,000 for each worker. Donations are not tax deductible.

“We are grateful for the support and generosity of the California Transportation Foundation,” said Anne Mayer, Executive Director of the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), which is the lead agency for the 91 Project. “Since the accident, I’ve been approached by many people who want to help. We now have a great way to support the workers, and I expect more accounts to be established in the next few days.”

CTF is a charitable transportation organization that supports California’s transportation community with various programs, including financial assistance to highway and transportation workers injured on the job.

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Worker Assistance Accounts Established for Injured Freeway Workers

Page 2 of 2

The CTF worked with RCTC and Atkinson/Walsh Joint Venture, the project's design-build contractor, to establish the worker accounts. All of the injured workers are employed by the joint venture.

The cause of the bridge lowering accident remains under investigation by Caltrans, Cal/OSHA and Washington DC-based KCE Structural Engineers. The length of the various investigations are still unknown but are expected to yield potential causes for the accident and determine the construction integrity and long-term safety of the bridge.

While the project continues, supporting the injured workers remains a top priority. Seven workers remain hospitalized. Out of respect for the privacy of the workers and their families, RCTC will not provide information regarding the injuries of the workers.

"The 91 Project Team's thoughts and prayers remain with those injured by this incident," said Mayer. "The new worker assistance accounts will prove to be important for the workers and their families and will allow everyone involved in the project and the community to provide their support."

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