

INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

Craft-Maintenance Division State of California Unit 12
Locals 3, 39 & 501, AFL-CIO

Pit Bull Bites Caltrans Worker Taking Pictures of a Homeless Encampment – October 18, 2018

It has happened again. Another one of our Caltrans members injured while working at a homeless encampment.

On October 9, 2018, one of our Unit 12 IUOE Caltrans members was attacked and bitten by a pit bull while taking pictures of a homeless encampment underneath Highway 101. Fortunately the bites were not life threatening, but none-the-less this is another example of the dangers involved with the cleanup of the homeless encampments.

First we filed a health and safety grievance against Caltrans which they denied and claimed that they were following proper procedures for the work being performed, then they denied the second grievance we filed stating that cleaning up homeless encampments is in our members' job specifications, which it is not.

As you can see, there is a pattern here. The Department that claims that safety is priority number one obviously does not practice what it preaches.

We have given Caltrans the opportunity to do the right thing, now we will take this issue up another notch. This incident including all future incidents involving our members working at homeless encampments on Caltrans property will be reported to CalOSHA via a formal written complaint.

We are asking all of our Caltrans members that if you are injured working on these encampments to immediately call your local IUOE Unit 12 Union Rep so they can get the information to file the complaint. The Union will be filing the complaints. Workers are legally protected from any and all retaliation for reporting a violation to their union.

We will continue to fight this battle and do everything we can to protect you on the job.

UNION STRONG!

Steve Crouch
Director of Public Employees