

Caltrans removing unsafe trees from highways

Caltrans is identifying and marking dead and dying trees that could impact the safety of the traveling public along state highways. The effort is part of an on-going need to address over 102 million dead trees that have died due to drought and bark beetle infestation since 2010.

Caltrans is marking potentially hazardous trees along the roadway with orange paint and is seeking permission from private property owners to remove marked trees from their property. Tree removal is provided at no cost because dead and dying trees near highways are potentially hazardous to the public.

In October 2015, Gov. Jerry Brown recognized the magnitude of tree mortality and declared a state of emergency.

Caltrans has been working with partners like PG&E, county public works, CalFire and the U.S. Forest Service to coordinate tree removal. Task force members have removed or felled more than 640,000 dead trees in high hazard areas. Caltrans has removed 107,000 hazardous trees near California highways and is expecting to remove 54,000 more by summer 2018.

Counties most-affected are: Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Placer, Tulare, and Tuolumne.

Trees in the Lake Tahoe Basin have already been marked at locations along highways 28, 50, 89 and 267. Removal work will begin after Labor Day.