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Welcome to this edition of *Occupational Health Watch*, an update of recent activities of the California Department of Public Health's Occupational Health Branch (OHB).

**Focus on...**

**Preventing Wood Chipper Deaths**

Antonio Barajas, 33, was a grounds maintenance worker who died last year after he was thrown against a wood chipper. A tree trimmer's climbing rope, which became entangled in branches fed into the wood chipper, snapped tight, sending Barajas into the machine. He left behind his wife and four-month-old son.

Nearly 200 grounds maintenance workers die on the job every year in the United States, many of whom are Latino or Hispanic. About a quarter of those deaths involve contact with wood chippers or other equipment or objects.

The factors that led to Barajas' tragic workplace fatality are the subject of a new four-minute video, [CDPH/FACE: Preventing wood chipper fatalities](#), produced by the California Department of Health. In the video, a fatality investigator, assisted by co-workers who were there during the fatal event, recreates the events, explaining the hazards that contributed to Barajas' death and how to avoid them. The video includes prevention recommendations and demonstrations on how to work safely around wood chippers.

Please share this video with landscapers and workers who operate wood chippers or others who may be interested. The video is available [on YouTube](#) (<http://youtu.be/7NKZM9IIEK>).

The video was produced by the [California Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation \(FACE\)](#) program in the Occupational Health Branch of the California Department of Public Health.

FACE's first 'digital story' supplements these FACE materials highlighting wood chipper fatality investigation findings.

- Fact sheet: Tree trimmer killed; pulled through wood chipper ([English](#), PDF) | [Spanish](#)
- Complete investigation reports on four workers who died in incidents involving wood chippers ([10CA010](#), PDF), ([00CA10](#), PDF), ([08CA005](#), PDF), ([10CA011](#), PDF)

To order materials, call 510-620-5772, or email [FACE@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:FACE@cdph.ca.gov). If you would like to receive e-mail notification of future California FACE work-related fatality investigation reports, or would like to evaluate our educational materials, please complete this short form: <http://fs6.formsite.com/BuildSafe/face/>.

OHB is dedicated to improving worker health and safety through prevention activities. We gather information on job hazards, work with others to test new approaches to prevent worker injury and illness, and assist with making changes at the workplace. For more information, visit the [OHB website](#) (<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/ohb>).

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