



## NEWS RELEASE

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*For immediate release*

### **Freeway Service Patrol: 25 Years of Helping Riverside County Motorists**

Flat tires, dead batteries, empty gas tanks, overheated engines, vehicle tows – these situations are all in a day’s work for the Freeway Service Patrol drivers who roam busy highways in Riverside County. June 28 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of FSP operations, which now cover 101 miles across the western portion of the county, including Interstates 15 and 215 and State Routes 60 and 91, and the 91 Express Lanes.

The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), which administers the program in partnership with the California Highway Patrol, estimates that drivers have performed more than 852,000 “assists” during the past 25 years. Three contracted towing companies – Pepe’s Towing, Airport Mobil Towing and Steve’s Towing – provide 35 drivers who operate 21 roving tow trucks along 10 “beats” or service areas in Riverside County.

Service started on June 28, 1993 with eight trucks on State Routes 60 and 91. During the early years, drivers performed about 16,000 assists per year. With the growth of the program over the years, assists now number approximately 40,000 each year.

The roadside assistance is designed to clear stranded motorists quickly from the county’s most heavily traveled roadways to enhance safety and mobility. The service is provided free of charge; FSP drivers also are not allowed to accept tips from motorists.

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## **Freeway Service Patrol: 25 Years in Riverside County**

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“Every year, the Freeway Service Patrol program helps thousands of motorists cope with roadside emergencies. The program also keeps our roadways flowing. Our dedicated FSP drivers provide customer service that is second-to-none, and we truly appreciate their efforts,” said RCTC Chairman Dana Reed.

After each “assist,” motorists are asked to complete a satisfaction survey. In nearly all cases, motorists heap praise on the FSP drivers, frequently likening them to angels and superheroes.

This spring, RCTC recognized five FSP drivers for excellent service. Awarded were:

- Top Driver – Rudy Gonzales (Pepe’s Towing)
- Driver of Excellence – David Camberos (Pepe’s Towing)
- Rookie of the Year – Nicholas Farias (Airport Mobil Towing)
- Public Choice – George Ballesteros (Steve’s Towing)
- Most Assists – Eduardo Quintero (Pepe’s Towing)

Program funding is provided by Caltrans, with additional funding provided by RCTC and the Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Review Committee for special weekend service. The CHP provides program oversight.

This fall, RCTC plans to expand service in southwestern Riverside County, using new funding from the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, more commonly known as the “gas tax.” \$1.6 million in gas tax funding will allow FSP coverage to extend 12.4 miles on Interstate 215 in Perris, Menifee, Wildomar and Murrieta, from Ethanac Road to Murrieta Hot Springs Road; and 27 miles on Interstate 15 from Indian Truck Trail to Temecula Parkway/79-South in Wildomar, Murrieta and Temecula.

For more information about the program, including a service area map and hours of operation, visit [www.rctc.org/fsp](http://www.rctc.org/fsp).