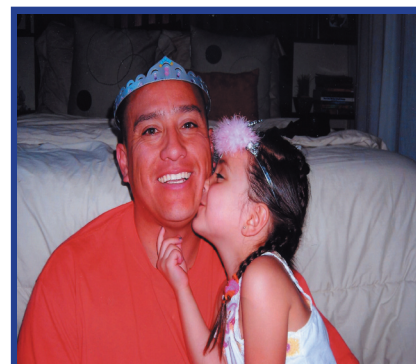


## **RAMON GASCA JR.'S Injured Worker Horror Story**

I hurt my back digging out a broken water pipe. The insurance carrier denied surgery and physical therapy, even though X-rays showed a damaged disc. My daughter used to stand by the mailbox hoping that the authorization for Daddy's surgery would come that day.



**About Me:** My name is Ramon Gasca, Jr. I'm 37 years old, and I live in Pittsburg, in Contra Costa County.

**My Family:** My wife, Tania, and I have four children: Anthony, 19; Devan, 13; McKenzie, 10; and Ryan, 4.

**My Job and What Happened:** I worked as an equipment operator for the Contra Costa Water District. I had done this work for 12 years, and I loved my job. My job was to replace broken water lines, repair leaking pipes, and make sure our homes and businesses had water service. On May 20, 2004, I was on a three-day job repairing a water line to an apartment building. I was working in a concrete vault, digging around the half full water pipe and burning off old, rusted bolts so we could replace the pipe. I injured my back from the digging, bending and lifting. I felt a sharp, burning pain in my back. The x-ray showed I had a damaged disc, and I had to have surgery to fuse two discs together. I still have four titanium rods in my spine. They're still there, and they cause me pain each day. I can't sleep at night because of the pain; I have to take pain killers each night.

**What this has meant to my life:** I've returned to my job, but I lost so much in earnings that I fell behind on my bills and had to file for bankruptcy. I'm still trying to dig out of the financial hole this injury pushed me into. It took so long to get authorization for surgery that my daughter would go to the mailbox every day saying, "Daddy, maybe today they'll OK your surgery and you can get better."

**BEFORE**  
**\$31,950**

**AFTER**  
**\$16,050**

## **How the Governor's Workers' Comp Law Affects Me**

**How Workers' Comp was supposed to help me:** Workers compensation insurance was to provide medical care to heal my injury, but the insurer denied surgery and physical therapy for months. I am due compensation for my permanent disabilities caused by my work injury. But the governor's cuts have chopped that in half, to just \$16,000. The governor's unfair permanent disability cuts add insult to my injury.

[www.VotersInjuredatWork.org](http://www.VotersInjuredatWork.org)

For more information, please contact Steve Hopcraft at 916/457-5546 or email to [steve@hopcraft.com](mailto:steve@hopcraft.com)