



Research and Education Unit
Cal/OSHA Consultation Service
Division of Occupational Safety and Health

Field Sanitation

Summary

T8 CCR Section 3457 requires employers of field workers to provide potable drinking water, toilets and hand washing facilities to hand-laborers in the field.

Effective Dates

April 1, 1992 for portable drinking water, toilets and hand washing facilities.

Scope of Coverage

Any agricultural establishment hiring workers for hand-labor. Includes work done by hand or with hand tools during cultivation, weeding, planting, and harvesting of vegetables, nuts, fruits, seedlings, or other crops including mushrooms-and the packing of produce in the field into containers, whether performed on the ground, on moving machinery, or in a shed.

Does not cover logging operations, care and feeding of livestock, or hand-labor operations in permanent structures (e.g. canning facilities or packing houses).

Note: The sanitation requirements for operations not covered by Section 3457 are contained in Sections 3360-3368 of Title 8.

Population Covered

Approximately 350,000 fulltime-equivalent jobs are filled by over 700,000 seasonal workers in the agricultural fields. The greatest number of field employees covered tend or harvest fruits and nut trees. Others tend vegetables and melons, and other field crops including sugar beets and cotton. Mushroom workers are also included, though they work under shelter.

Key Requirements and Provisions

- Potable drinking water, suitably cool and in sufficient amounts-dispensed in single-use drinking cups or by fountains, located so as to be readily accessible to all employees. As per T8 CCR Section 3395, water shall be provided free of charge and frequent drinking of water, 1 quart or more per hour per employee throughout the work shift, shall be encouraged.
- One toilet and hand washing facility for each 20 employees of each sex, located within a quarter mile walk, or if not feasible, at the closest point of vehicular access. As an alternative to providing the required toilet and hand washing facilities themselves, employers may transport employees conducting hand-labor operations to toilet and hand washing facilities under either of the following circumstances:
 - When employees perform field work for a period of less than two hours (including time spent traveling to and from the field), or

- When fewer than five employees in the establishment are engaged in hand-labor operations on any given day. Pre-moistened towelettes cannot be substituted for hand washing facilities.

- Maintenance in accordance with public health sanitation practices, including: upkeep of water quality through daily change or as often as needed; toilets kept clean, sanitary, and operational; hand washing facilities refilled with potable water as necessary, and kept clean and sanitary; and the prevention of any unsanitary conditions through waste disposal.
- Opportunity for reasonable use, through notification of each employee by the employer of the location of the water and the facilities, and the allowance of reasonable opportunities during the workday to use them. The employer also must inform the employee of the relevant health hazards in the field and the practices necessary to minimize exposure to them.
- Failing to provide a source of potable drinking water, a toilet and/or hand washing area will result in a minimum, non-adjustable penalty of \$750.00.
- The abatement period for violations will be fixed at one day, and the filing of an appeal will not stay the abatement period.
- An employer who fails to provide facilities as required by the standard will be required to annually complete a field sanitation compliance form for a period of 5 years following the citation.

Benefits

- A reduction in the number of workers who become ill from urinary tract infections, heat stress, and skin disease.
- Reduced worker exposure to pesticides and fertilizers.

Contacting Cal/OSHA Consultation Service

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Note: The information provided is not meant to be either a substitute for or legal interpretation of the occupational safety and health regulations. Readers are cautioned to refer directly to Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations for detailed information regarding the regulation's scope, specifications, and exceptions and for other requirements that may be applicable to their operations.