

Field Sanitation

Approximately 350,000 jobs are filled by over 700,000 seasonal workers in agricultural fields in California.

Title 8, California Code of Regulations (T8CCR), section **3457** requires employers to provide potable drinking water, toilets and hand washing facilities to hand-laborers in the field. Employers that comply with these requirements will have:

- Fewer workers who become ill from urinary tract infections, heat stress, skin and other diseases.
- Reduced worker exposure to pesticides and fertilizers.

Workplaces Covered

Section 3457 applies to any agricultural establishment with workers doing hand labor. This includes:

- Hand-manipulation of irrigation pipes and other irrigation equipment.
- Work done by hand or with hand tools during cultivation, weeding, planting, and harvesting of crops such as vegetables, nuts, fruits, seedlings, and mushrooms.
- Packing of produce in the field into containers, whether performed on the ground, on moving machinery, or in a temporary packing shed located in the field.

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

The sanitation requirements for operations not covered by section 3457 are contained in sections **3360- 3368**.

Key Requirements and Provisions

- Potable drinking water must be fresh and pure, suitably cool and in sufficient amounts, considering the air temperature, humidity, and the nature of the work performed. It must be dispensed in single-use drinking cups or by fountains that are readily accessible to all employees. The use of common drinking cups or dippers is prohibited.



Employers may supply employees with individual water bottles/containers, provided:

- Hygiene is ensured.
 - It is free of charge and replenishment is readily available.
 - It is located as close as practicable to where employees are working.
 - Employees are encouraged to drink frequently: one (1) quart or more per hour per employee throughout the work shift.
- Separate toilet facilities for each sex must be provided for each twenty (20) employees or less, and at least one handwashing facility must be provided for each twenty (20) employees or less. Reference section 3457 for details and exceptions.
 - Toilets and handwashing facilities must be accessibly located and near each other, located within a quarter-mile walk (or within 5 minutes, whichever is closer). If not feasible due to terrain, then at the closest vehicular access point.

Exceptions. Employers may transport employees to toilets and hand washing facilities if one of the following applies:

- Employees perform fieldwork for less than two hours (including time spent traveling to and from the field).

- Fewer than five employees in the establishment are engaged in hand-labor operations on any given day.
- Employees are not engaged in hand-labor operations.
- Maintenance standards must be in accordance with public health sanitation practices, including:
 - Upkeep of drinking water quality through daily change, or more often if needed.
 - Regular cleaning of drinking water containers.
 - Toilets kept clean, sanitary, and operational.
 - Toilet paper is provided in a suitable holder in each unit.
 - Hand washing facilities refilled with potable water as necessary and kept clean and sanitary.
 - Prevention of any unsanitary conditions through adequate waste disposal.

Written records of service and maintenance of toilet facilities must be maintained and retained for two years.

- Employees must be informed of:
 - The location of the water and sanitation facilities, and the allowance of reasonable opportunities during the workday to use them.
 - The relevant health hazards in the field and the practices necessary to minimize exposure to them, including:
 - The importance of drinking water frequently – especially on hot days.

- To urinate frequently as necessary.
- Wash hands before and after using the toilet.
- Washing hands before eating and smoking.



- Employers who fail to provide facilities as required by the standard will be required to complete a field sanitation compliance form annually for 5 years following the citation.
- Failing to provide a source of potable drinking water, a toilet and/or hand washing area - as required - 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.

This fact sheet only provides an overview — not all the requirements of section 3457. The information provided is not meant to be a substitute for or legal interpretation of the occupational safety and health regulations. Readers are cautioned to refer directly to T8CCR for detailed information regarding the regulation’s scope, specifications, exceptions, and for other requirements, such as section 3395 Heat Illness Prevention in Outdoor Places of Employment, that may be applicable to their operations.

Resources

Cal/OSHA

- [Section 3203](#) Injury and Illness Prevention Program
- [Section 3395](#) Heat Illness Prevention in Outdoor Places of Employment
- [Section 3457](#) Field Sanitation
- [Safety and Health in Agricultural Field Operations](#)

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This document is available with active links at www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_publications
 For assistance regarding this subject matter, employers may contact
Cal/OSHA Consultation Services at 1-800-963-9424 or InfoCons@dir.ca.gov
www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/consultation.html

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