

FIELD SANITATION FACT SHEET

Revised on July, 1995

Cal/OSHA Field Sanitation Standard (Section [3457](#), Title 8, California Code of Regulations)

Summary:

Requires employers of field workers to provide potable drinking water, toilets and handwashing facilities to hand-laborers in the field.

Effective Dates:

April 1, 1992 for portable drinking water, toilets and handwashing 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 this standard are contained in Sections [3360-3368](#) of Title 8.

Population Covered:

An estimated 157,000 agricultural field employees. 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.
- One toilet and handwashing 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 handwashing facilities themselves, employers may transport employees conducting hand-labor operations to toilet and handwashing 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 handwashing 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; handwashing 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 handwashing 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.



Cal-OSHA Reporter[®]

[Back to DIR Homepage](#)

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION FOR THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMUNITY