

Toilet (Field and Portable) and Hand-Washing Facilities^{π, ϕ}

Is there 1 toilet facility for every 20 workers of each sex, or fraction thereof?

The Code of Federal Regulations and Cal-OSHA stipulate that there must be one toilet facility and one hand-washing facility for every 20 workers of each sex, or any fraction of 20. For example, for 30 workers, the grower would be required to supply two toilet facilities. Urinals may be installed in rooms used only by men, but the number of toilets cannot be less than 2/3 the minimum number.

In addition, Cal-OSHA states that where there are less than five employees, separate toilet rooms for each sex are not required.

Clean and well-maintained toilet and hand-washing facilities should be provided for all employees and customers. This includes access to potable water, toilet paper, soap, and single-use towels. The toilet and sinks should be serviced and cleaned on a regular basis and that schedule should be kept on record. Facilities should be checked formally at least weekly and informally on a continuing basis, and the information should be documented on the Restroom and Field Sanitation Logs.

Cleaning and servicing of the unit may be contracted with a sanitation unit rental company. If this is the case, documentation will be provided by and collected from the contracted company. A representative map will be provided showing where the sanitation unit(s) are located relative to the agricultural plots.

Is there 1 hand-washing facility with single-use towels for every 20 employees?

Hand-washing facilities should exist in the same quantity as toilets. The soap should be dispensed from a dispenser rather than a soap bar in order to prevent cross-contamination.

The containers used to store and transport the water for hand washing should be emptied, cleaned, sanitized and refilled with clean water routinely. These containers should have a minimum capacity of 15 gallons of water.

If possible, there should be a mechanism for collecting and properly disposing of the dirty water from hand washing, rather than letting it fall on the ground.

Do toilets lock from inside?

The code also states that toilet rooms must be able to be locked from inside to ensure privacy.

Are toilets easily accessible, and can employees use them whenever they need to?

The placement of sanitary facilities is important both to employee access and in preventing field contamination. The toilet facilities should be within 1/4 mile from each workers' place in the field. The field toilets should be located away from the growing fields and packing/storage house(s). These facilities should not be located near an irrigation water source, or in a location where heavy rains could cause sewage to run into the fields. The doors to a toilet facility should not open into a room or area where food is exposed, in order to avoid contamination.

It is imperative that the employees be able to use the toilet facilities whenever they need it, rather than only during breaks. This will decrease the likelihood of employees relieving themselves in or near the fields, which can lead to contamination of the food product.

Are portable toilets handled appropriately?

For some farms, it is not practical to set up the appropriate number of toilet facilities in each field when work is done in the fields at irregular intervals. Most growers elect to use portable toilet facilities so that they can be moved within the field to where the work is being done at that time. The grower must be careful to provide the proper tanks for holding sewage waste to avoid drainage into the field. The nature of these units also requires the grower to be meticulous about their transfer to other parts of the field. It is important that the units be removed from the field for sewage collection, cleaning and servicing by a qualified and reputable service. Conducting these activities in the field poses a microbial hazard due to the risk of a spill or leak.

Is sewage disposed of properly?

Raw sewage can contaminate fields and water source, in addition to everything else it comes into contact with, if not managed properly. Plumbing should be able to properly transport sewage and liquid waste away from the field and/or packing shed. It is imperative that the grower does everything necessary to give sewage transport trucks direct access to the facilities in order to properly dispose of sewage. Systems should be in place to prevent drainage of sewage into the field, and to protect crops in the event of a spill or leak. Growers should contact state septage coordinators for assistance in complying with state regulations for sewage disposal.

Procedure for handling a septic or sanitation hazard in the field

Sanitation facilities that have been tipped over or are in any way not available for use should be noted immediately and dealt with in a manner that minimizes the risk of contaminating the produce. In the case of a sanitation unit spilling or any other septic leakage occurring in or near field boundaries, the following clean-up steps should be performed:

1. Any affected produce is immediately disposed of in a covered waste bin.
2. The contaminated area will be marked off with caution tape or string.
3. Signs in appropriate languages will be posted at the perimeter prohibiting entry to the contaminated area.

4. People and animals will be kept out until they are sufficiently decontaminated.
5. Any solid waste still resting on the surface will be collected, shoveled up, and removed to the waste bin.
6. Any affected permanent structures will be hosed off and disinfected with a dilute bleach solution.
7. The sanitation unit will be cleaned up and replaced by the company providing the units and maintenance services.

The spillage event and corrective actions should be written down in the field sanitation log and kept in your records.

REFERENCES

Φ University of California Davis, **Good Agricultural Practices A Self-Audit for Growers and Handlers**
<http://ucce.ucdavis.edu/files/filelibrary/5453/4362.pdf>

Π University of Minnesota. **FSP4U A Food Safety Plan (Template) for You.**
<http://safety.cfans.umn.edu/pdfs/FSP4U.pdf>