

■ WASHINGTON INDUSTRIAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT OF 1973 (**FIELD SANITATION AND HEAT EXPOSURE**)

TERMS: Under the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act, the state labor and industries director has adopted requirements for sanitation facilities in the field and related measures to protect field workers from heat-related illness.

Drinking Water — Without cost to the workers, agricultural employers must ensure that a sufficient quantity of suitably cool drinking water is readily accessible to workers at all times, and the workers must have an opportunity to drink up to one quart of water per hour. The water must meet state or federal public drinking water quality standards and be furnished in sanitary, closable containers. Open containers such as pails or barrels from which water must be poured or dipped are prohibited, as is the use of common drinking cups or dippers.

Handwashing Facilities — Without cost to the workers, agricultural employers must provide one handwashing unit for every 20 workers or fraction thereof engaged in hand-labor operations in the field. Each unit must be equipped with a tap, a basin and an adequate supply of sanitary running water, soap and single-use hand towels. The handwashing facilities must be located near the required toilet facilities, within 1/4 mile of the worksite or at the point nearest the field where vehicles can still enter. The employer must also provide trash containers for disposal of handwashing waste.

Toilet Facilities — Without cost to the workers, agricultural employers must provide one toilet facility for every 20 workers or fraction thereof engaged in hand-labor operations in the field. Each unit must be ventilated and screened, and have self-closing doors that are lockable from the inside. All toilet facilities must be inspected at the start of the workday to assure that they are functional, clean and sanitary; each unit must be supplied with toilet paper. The toilet facilities must be located near the required handwashing facilities, within 1/4 mile of the worksite or at the point nearest the field where vehicles can still enter. Employers and supervisors must allow workers reasonable time during the work period to use the facilities.

Prevention of Heat-Related Illness — In addition to providing field workers with drinking water in the field, agricultural employers are required to help prevent heat-related illness among the workers, by including this subject in their written accident prevention program and related worker training. Worker training must cover such topics as the factors that can contribute to heat-related illness, the symptoms of heat-related illness, the role of clothing and water consumption in preventing heat-related illness, and the importance of reporting signs of illness to supervisors.

Supervisors are required to relieve from duty any worker showing signs of heat-related illness, take steps to reduce the worker's body temperature, and monitor the worker to determine whether medical attention is necessary.

ENFORCEMENT: *Division of Occupational Safety and Health, Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, Olympia, Washington 98504 (360-902-5494; toll-free 800-423-7233).*

SPECIAL NOTE: An employer may not fire, discipline or discriminate against a worker because the worker has filed a complaint or made use of any other right granted by this law. Retaliation should be reported to the Department of Labor and Industries within 30 days after the violation occurs.