

Portable Toilet and Sanitation Best Practices for Women in Construction




The OSHA Sanitation Standard for Construction ([29 CFR 1926.51](#)) requires employers to provide accessible sanitary facilities for all personnel and to ensure that these facilities are maintained in an appropriately clean and sanitary condition.

Sanitary and healthy workplace conditions promote a productive work environment and ensure the health and welfare of workers. This fact sheet is intended to alert workers to the OSHA requirements for toilets at construction jobsites, and to suggest employer best practices for improving sanitary conditions at these sites for both men and women.

OSHA Standard

Employers must provide a minimum number of toilets for workers according to the following table:

Number of Workers	Number of Toilets	
20 or less	1	
20 or more	1 toilet seat and 1 urinal per 40 workers	
200 or more	1 toilet seat and 1 urinal per 50 workers	

A toilet, by definition, has a seat, while a urinal is a stand-up bowl for urination. Most portable toilets have both a seat and urinal, but some units have one or the other.

Worksite Sanitation Evaluation

It is important to remember that OSHA requirements are the minimum standards with which employers must comply. Employers should evaluate each worksite and its facilities to ensure working men and women are provided with safe and healthful working conditions.

You have the right to a safe workplace!

Best Practices

Employers should consider the following when planning the number and location of toilets at a jobsite:

- Toilets should provide privacy, including locking systems, and should be separated by gender.
- Toilets should be no more than 10 minutes from where workers are assigned to work. Employers should consider a worker's total travel time, including descending from work platforms, etc.
- Additional toilet facilities may be appropriate if several workers will need to use the restroom at the same time (e.g., during scheduled breaks.)
- It is important that toilet facilities be cleaned often enough to meet workers' health and sanitation needs. Employers should regularly evaluate the condition of toilets at their worksites and set a routine servicing schedule for cleaning, waste removal, and replenishment of supplies such as toilet paper and hand-cleansing agents. Servicing schedules should account for the number of toilets, workers, and shifts.
- Toilets should be well lit, ventilated, and in a secure area.

Employers should also provide:

- Soap and water and/or anti-bacterial hand cleansers,
- Individual hand towels, air blowers or clean individual sections of continuous toweling, and
- Trash cans for disposal of hand towels and feminine hygiene products.

Note: OSHA's Sanitation Standard for Construction contains requirements for washing facilities where workers are engaged in the application of paints, coatings, herbicides, or insecticides, or in other operations where contaminants may be harmful to workers.

Through the OSHA and National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) Alliance, NAWIC developed this product for informational purposes only. It does not necessarily reflect the official views of OSHA or the U.S. Department of Labor.

Photo Credit: Vanessa Sanchez of the Northern California Carpenters Local Union #217 (Foster City, CA) provided the photo used in this document.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, [employers are responsible](#) for providing a safe and healthy workplace and [workers have rights](#). OSHA can help answer questions or concerns from employers and workers. OSHA's [On-site Consultation Program](#) offers free and confidential advice to small and medium-sized businesses, with priority given to high-hazard worksites. For more information, contact your [regional or area OSHA office](#), call 1-800-321-OSHA (6742), or visit www.osha.gov.