

---

# Environmental Public Health Guidelines for Silviculture Camps

## PURPOSE

This document is provided to aid operators in the understanding of public health requirements in silviculture camps with respect to food services, water supply and liquid and solid waste disposal. All other applicable Public Health Act regulations are also listed at the end of this document.

## DEFINITIONS

**Work Camp** means one or more buildings established to accommodate those employed in mining, lumbering, construction, drilling, resource exploration or any other similar industry. This includes the land on which the building or buildings are situated.

**Building** means any permanent or temporary structure, tent, vehicle, or mobile unit used by anyone working or residing at a work camp or used for the storage, preparation or serving of food at a work camp.

**Public Health Nuisance** means a condition that is or might become injurious or dangerous to the public health or that might hinder in any manner the prevention or suppression of disease.

**Silviculture** is a branch of forestry that deals with the development, cultivation and care of forest trees.

## FOOD HANDLING PERMIT NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

All silviculture camps which provide food services to its employees shall contact Alberta Health Services (AHS) to obtain a Food Handling Permit. The camp's owner/operator shall inform AHS – Environmental Public Health( AHS-EPH) of all camp movements **at least 2 weeks prior to start up** by email: [workcamps@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:workcamps@albertahealthservices.ca) or by contacting their local Public Health Inspector.

## WORK CAMP CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Silviculture facilities must be located on land that is adequately drained and located so that no public health nuisance is created.

Accommodations for personal use and units with private kitchens, for individual use only are exempt from public health regulations.

The campsite should be sufficiently sized to provide enough land area to locate buildings, sewage disposal systems and water supply systems in a manner that will satisfy all of the required setback distances. Contact the local Municipal Development Officer for the required setback distances.

## FOOD SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Silviculture operations using tents for food preparation, storage or accommodation should consult with their local Public Health Inspector to discuss heating and pest control issues at least two weeks before operation.

Where tents are used for temporary kitchen facilities, the kitchen and food service area must be fully enclosed (i.e. roof, walls, and doorway) to prevent the entry of rain, dust and insects. Non-absorbent flooring that is smooth, durable and easy to clean must be provided in all areas of the tent, where food is prepared and stored.

Where permanently equipped, relocatable kitchen facilities, such as trailer units are used, the interior walls, floors and ceilings must be constructed of food-grade materials that are smooth, durable, non-absorbent and suitable for easy cleaning.

All doors and window openings in the kitchen area must be adequately screened to prevent the entry of insect and animal pests.

Adequate lighting must be provided in the kitchen to ensure that this area is bright enough to facilitate cleaning and safe food preparation.

The camp kitchen shall be equipped with a designated hand sink, and equipped with potable water, soap and paper towels.

The camp kitchen shall be equipped with at least a two-compartment sink, if no reusable dishware from the crew is washed in the kitchen. This two-compartment sink shall be large enough to immerse the largest piece of cookware. If reusable dishware is washed in the kitchen, a three-compartment sink is required with the sinks large enough to immerse the largest piece of cookware.

The owner of the kitchen and dining facilities shall ensure that the facilities are maintained in a clean, sanitary condition and in good repair.

Where potable water is not available from a pressure system, it must be provided in sanitary containers (e.g. camping water jugs) equipped with a pouring faucet or spigot. These containers should be washed and sanitized before refilling.

## FOOD TRANSPORTATION, STORAGE & PREPARATION

A person, who owns and operates a vehicle for transporting food to a work camp shall ensure that:

- Food products are stored and arranged in a manner that will prevent contamination from non-food products.

- All food in the vehicle is properly protected to prevent dirt, dust, vermin, unnecessary handling and other contamination.

- All non-frozen high-risk foods (e.g. meat, milk & dairy products) that are transported in the vehicle must be maintained at a temperature of 4°C or colder at all times while it is in the vehicle.

All food handling practices must comply with the Alberta Food Regulation and the Food Retail and Foodservices Code.

## WATER SUPPLIES

Water used for food preparation and hand hygiene purposes must be obtained from an Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (AESRD) approved water treatment plant (i.e. town water treatment plant) or an AHS permitted facility. Surface or non-potable water shall not be used for food preparation or hand hygiene purposes.

If the camp is located in a remote location (requiring helicopter or off-road vehicles) the operator should discuss possible water sources with the local Public Health Inspector.

Operations that have their own water delivery vehicles must have the vehicles inspected and approved by AHS and submit monthly bacteriological water samples.

All water sources for food preparation and bathing should be reviewed with the local Public Health Inspector.

## TOILET / WASHROOM FACILITIES

The facility must meet the required number of washrooms in accordance with the Alberta Building Code. Toilet paper must be provided at all water closets and outdoor pit privies.

Handwashing facilities must be provided in a number and manner sufficient to serve the employees, and must be equipped with potable water, soap and paper towels.

Where the camp is not equipped with a water distribution system that provides water to plumbing fixtures, outdoor pit privies or port-a-potties must be provided on-site. Outdoor privies must be:

- Maintained in a clean and sanitary condition and in good working order.
- Protected so that insects, rodents or other animals do not have access to the contents.
- Located not less than 30 metres from any river, stream, creek, lake, spring or other body of surface water, unless the outdoor privy is provided with a watertight compartment to receive all wastes.
- Maintained so that waste material contained in the privies' pits does not contaminate any groundwater resource.
- Filled in with soil or dirt when full or after the silviculture camp is moved and in a manner that prevents a nuisance.

Showers in work camps should be equipped with a floor, that is smooth, durable, easy to clean and made of material that does not pose a hazard to the users. All shower waste water shall be directed away from the camp and disposed of in a manner that prevents pooling and entry into a water body.

## GARBAGE STORAGE & REMOVAL

All kitchen liquid wastes shall be collected in a waterproof containment vessel and disposed of in accordance with the Alberta Plumbing Code. Kitchen sumps are only allowed after obtaining a waiver from the appropriate government agency (e.g. AESRD), that is responsible for managing the land where the camp is located .

An adequate number of watertight, fly-proof, and covered garbage containers must be provided in or near the kitchen/dining areas and living quarters. Garbage must be removed from the work camp as often as necessary to prevent overflow of garbage and to prevent the garbage from providing a feeding ground for insects/pests and animals.

## APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

Food Regulation AR 31/2006

Food Retail and Foodservices Code, 2003

Work Camps Regulation, AR 218/2002

Nuisance & General Sanitation Regulation, AR 243/2003

Website: [http://www.qp.alberta.ca/570.cfm?frm\\_isbn=9780779774685&search\\_by=link](http://www.qp.alberta.ca/570.cfm?frm_isbn=9780779774685&search_by=link)

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your local Public Health Inspector or your nearest Environmental Public Health office as listed below or email:

**[workcamps@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:workcamps@albertahealthservices.ca)**

*For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health Office.*

**Edmonton Main Office**  
**Calgary Main Office**  
**Lethbridge Main Office**

**780-735-1800**  
**780-943-2295**  
**403-388-6689**

**North Zone: [workcamps@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:workcamps@albertahealthservices.ca)**  
**Red Deer Main Office** **403-356-6366**  
**[www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph.asp)**

5EPHWkc-14-001  
Created: May/14