

General Housekeeping Requirements — OSHA Standard 1910.22¹

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The Impact of Safety on Florida Agriculture

Florida agriculture, including forestry and fishing, made an annual economic impact of \$98 billion in 2004. More than 390,000 workers are directly employed in these industries in Florida, and another 380,000 people are employed in activities related to agriculture (Hodges 2006). The state's agricultural enterprises range from large citrus, vegetable and cattle operations to small, family-operated farms.

In spite of the popular images that romanticize agriculture, it is a highly mechanized, industrial profession with one of the highest injury and death rates among U.S. industries. The last study of death rates in Florida agriculture (Liller 2000) found 240 deaths from 1989 to 1998. In 2005, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS 2005a), reported that death due to injury in agriculture was 31.4 deaths per 100,000 full-time workers, which was the highest rate among all major occupational groups and an increase of 14% over 2004. Also in 2005, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 6,100 injuries per 100,000 full-time workers (BLS 2005b).

Safety in Florida agriculture is challenging because:

- the state's agricultural enterprises are diverse,
- safety knowledge among workers varies,
- manual labor is used extensively,
- the climate creates year-round heat stress.

Therefore, it is vital to assist the public in learning about OSHA documents related to agriculture. More information about the OSHA Standards and agricultural safety is available at the following Web sites:

- Florida AgSafe: <http://www.flagsafe.ufl.edu>
- OSHA Regulations:
<http://www.osha.gov/comp-links.html>
- National Agricultural Safety Database:
<http://www.cdc.gov/nasd>

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Overview

This is a condensation of Standard 1910.22 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. While this standard specifically exempts permanent places of employment where agricultural work is performed, it should be evident that the intent was to exclude only the out-the-door portions of work in agricultural production. Certainly this standard establishes certain conditions of employment for such operations as greenhouses, packinghouses and agricultural shops, etc.

This document is not intended to be totally inclusive but rather to highlight the information and requirements in the complete OSHA standard that owners and managers of all agricultural businesses should understand.

All places of employment, passageways, storerooms and service rooms must be kept clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition.

The **floor** of every workroom must be maintained in a clean and, in so far as possible, dry condition.

Where wet processes are used, drainage must be maintained, and false floors, platforms, mats or other dry standing places should be provided where practicable.

To facilitate cleaning, **every floor, working place and passageway** must be kept free from protruding nails, splinters, holes or loose boards.

Where mechanical handling equipment is used, sufficient safe clearances must be allowed for aisles, at loading docks, through doorways and wherever turns or passage must be made.

Aisles and passageways must be kept clear and in good repair, with no obstruction, across or in the aisles, that could create a hazard. Permanent aisles and passageways must be appropriately marked.

Covers and/or guardrails must be provided to protect personnel from the hazards of open pits, tanks, vats, ditches, etc.

It is unlawful to place, or cause or permit to be placed, on any **floor or roof** of a building or other

structure, a load greater than that for which the floor or roof is approved by the local building codes. It is the responsibility of anyone who owns a building that is used for mercantile, business, industrial, or storage purposes to post and to maintain plates that state the loads for which the building is approved.

References

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