

COVID-19 UPDATE



CAL/OSHA TO HOST AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY WEBINARS

Cal/OSHA Consultation Services are hosting webinars for agricultural employers to help clarify what their responsibilities are in regards to employee health and safety during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The webinar will address employer responsibilities to effectively implement their Injury and Illness Prevention Program, COVID-19 Plans, and best practices to ensure employees work safely.

The seminar is intended for agricultural business owners, managers and supervisors. Space is limited and you must register prior to the webinar by contacting SFVConsultation@dir.ca.gov. The webinar will be offered in English and Spanish. For a list of dates and times along with additional information, [click here](#).

USDA RELEASES CFAP TOOLKIT FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Agricultural producers can now apply for USDA's Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), which provides direct payments to offset impacts from the coronavirus pandemic. Options to apply are available on farmers.gov/cfap and USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has launched a call center to help answer questions. FSA staff members are available via phone, fax and online tools to help producers complete applications.

FSA wants to ensure producers are aware of available online tools and the call center, as well as how FSA is working virtually with producers to complete applications. This toolkit is meant for producers and agricultural organizations to use to share information in their networks. This toolkit includes:

- Key messages
- Newsletter article
- Social media posts
- Social media story posts
- Posters

The full toolkit can be found here:

<https://www.farmers.gov/sites/default/files/documents/CFAP-StakeholdersToolkit-08202020.pdf>

CAL/OSHA REMINDS EMPLOYERS TO PROTECT WORKERS FROM UNHEALTHY AIR DUE TO WILDFIRE SMOKE

Cal/OSHA released a reminder to all employers of the emergency regulation set forth by state-run Cal/OSHA in 2019, and extended to early 2021, designed to protect workers from the dangers of wildfires. Cal/OSHA reminded employers that they are required to take steps to identify and reduce exposure for workers exposed to wildfires. The regulation applies to workplaces where the current Air Quality Index (AQI) for airborne particulate matter (PM 2.5) is 151 or greater, and where employers should reasonably anticipate that employees could be susceptible.

Effective through early 2021, a California employer must take the following steps:

- Identify harmful exposure to airborne particulate matter from wildfire smoke at the start of each shift and periodically thereafter by checking the AQI for PM 2.5 in regions where workers are located.
- Reduce harmful exposure to wildfire smoke if feasible, for example, by relocating work to an enclosed building with filtered air or to an outdoor location where the AQI for PM 2.5 is 150 or lower.
- If employers cannot reduce workers' harmful exposure to wildfire smoke so that the AQI for PM 2.5 is 150 or lower, they must provide:
 - Respirators such as N95 masks to all employees for voluntary use and
 - Training on the new regulation, the health effects of wildfire smoke, and the safe use and maintenance of respirators.

More information regarding this regulation and recent reminder announcement can be found here:

<https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/wildfire/Worker-Protection-from-Wildfire-Smoke.html>