

G4.85(2) Washroom facilities where no plumbing is available

Issued January 1, 2005

Section 4.85(2) of the *OHS Regulation* ("*Regulation*") states:

- (2) If plumbed washroom facilities cannot be provided because of the nature of the workplace or the nature of the work in which the worker is involved, the employer must
 - (a) provide access to portable washroom and hand-washing facilities, or
 - (b) make such other reasonable arrangements to accommodate workers as the circumstances allow, if access to portable washroom and hand-washing facilities cannot be provided.

Where access to or installation of plumbed facilities is not practical, portable toilets should be provided and maintained. The number of portable facilities (toilets and hand-washing facilities) should be sufficient for the number of workers, and the facilities should be readily accessible to workers. See OHS Guidelines [G4.85\(1\)-1](#) and [G.4.85\(1\)-2](#) for recommendations on the number of facilities and their location.

In highly transient or short-term operations, where it is not practicable to provide portable facilities, the needs of workers must be reasonably accommodated. Depending on the workplace location, workers may be given the opportunity to access alternative facilities such as those in parks or public buildings, or be provided with other options appropriate to the workplace location.

G4.85(3) Maintenance of washroom facilities

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Regulatory excerpt

Section 4.85(3) of the *OHS Regulation* ("*Regulation*") states:

If washroom facilities are provided they must be

- (a) maintained in proper working order,
- (b) kept clean and sanitary, and
- (c) provided with the supplies necessary for their use.

Purpose of guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to explain the minimum standards for maintaining washroom facilities in accordance with section 4.85(3) of the *Regulation*.

Maintenance requirements for washroom facilities

The employer must ensure washroom facilities are maintained to meet the requirements of section 4.85(3).

Washroom facilities must be serviced, cleaned, and sanitized as frequently as necessary to maintain them in a clean and sanitary condition. Sanitized means that cleaned surfaces have been treated by a process that destroys bacteria, viruses, and other microorganisms that can cause disease or otherwise affect a worker's health.

For example, urinals, floors, walls, toilet seats, and high touch points like door handles should be cleaned with appropriate cleansing and sanitizing agents and wiped dry. Sanitizing products should be applied according to the manufacturer's directions in order to ensure effectiveness.

Employers should regularly inspect and assess the condition of washroom facilities at worksites as part of their occupational health and safety program and set a routine servicing schedule for cleaning, waste removal, and replenishment of supplies. Servicing schedules should account for the number of toilets, workers, and shifts. Employers must ensure that washroom facilities provided through rental contracts are appropriately serviced to meet the requirements.

To facilitate compliance with the requirements of section 4.85(3) of the *Regulation*, the employer should have a process in place for reporting and addressing issues with the maintenance or cleanliness of the washroom facilities, or availability of supplies, and ensure that workers are made aware of that process.

Keeping a cleaning log and/or schedule and posting it, as well as the process for reporting issues, in or around each washroom facility can help employers show they have been duly diligent in meeting their responsibilities. It can also help to assure workers that the facilities are being reasonably maintained.

With respect to the provision of supplies, each washroom should be provided with suitable waste receptacles and with the supplies necessary for the use of the facilities, such as a supply of soap or other hand cleanser, toilet paper, and hand-drying towels or air dryers.

Washroom facilities must also be adequately illuminated in accordance with the requirements of section 4.65 of the *Regulation*. Refer to OHS Guideline [G4.65 Illumination levels](#).

If the washroom facilities are not under the employer's direct control, the employer must still ensure that all facilities intended for use by workers are maintained to meet the requirements of section 4.85(3).

G4.86 Change areas

Issued January 1, 2005

Regulatory excerpt

Section 4.86 of the *OHS Regulation* ("*Regulation*") states:

If the employer requires the worker to change into protective work clothing at the workplace, the employer must ensure that adequate change areas are provided.

Purpose of guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to clarify when change areas are to be provided, and what constitutes an adequate change area under section 4.86 of the *Regulation*.

Definitions

For the purposes of section 4.86 of the *Regulation*, the following definitions apply:

- **"Protective work clothing"** means any clothing provided by the employer to protect the worker from hazards in the workplace or to prevent contamination of the workplace by materials the worker may bring into it on their personal clothing.
- **"Change area"** means a room or similar area within the workplace that will allow individual workers privacy while changing into or out of street clothes as necessary to properly use protective clothing.

Adequate change area

Section 4.86 is intended to ensure that workers who are required to remove their street clothes and put on protective work clothing to perform their work are assured of privacy while changing. An adequate change area would also provide for a suitable place for workers to store their personal clothing and personal effects while they are working. A change area should contain or be in close proximity to individual lockers for the secure storage of the worker's clothing and personal effects.

Section 4.86 does not apply when workers put on coveralls, uniforms, or other work clothing or protective wear that does not require them to remove their street clothes.

Group change rooms may be provided but they should have provision for workers who wish personal privacy while changing clothes. A washroom with a lockable door or a room to which access can be restricted to ensure privacy may be suitable as a change room. A toilet stall with a locking door within a washroom would not normally be considered of sufficient size to function as a change area.

Workplace contaminants

Certain sections of the *Regulation* set specific provisions for change areas, washing and/or shower facilities, and the handling of street clothing and protective clothing to ensure exposure to workplace contaminants is adequately controlled. The following table lists some examples:

Part	Section	
Chemical and Biological Substances	5.26	Work process involving substances such as lead, mercury, asbestos, silica, or pesticides
Substance Specific Requirements	6.55	Handling of personal protective equipment for workers exposed to cytotoxic drugs
	6.95	Provision of wash and shower facilities for personal hygiene for workers handling pesticides
	6.97	Handling of personal protective equipment for workers exposed to pesticides or pesticide residue
	6.107	Removing protective clothing for workers handling treated lumber
Diving, Fishing and Other Marine Operations	24.66	Diving operations at contaminated sites
Laboratories	30.17	Laboratories where toxic, radioactive, or biohazardous substances are handled