

# **Seasonal Farm Worker**

## **Housing Guidelines**

This document is intended to assist local public health and other agencies in assessing the suitability of housing intended for the housing of both domestic and SAWP (Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program) administered by F.A.R.M.S. (Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services) and NOC C&D (Agricultural Low Skill) administered by Service Canada Simcoe Ontario.

These recommendations are the result of consultation with, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Ontario Fire Marshal's Office, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services, numerous local health units and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The recommendations are to be interpreted as minimum requirements with regard to Seasonal Housing for Seasonal Farm Workers.

These recommendations are designed to assist in meeting legislative and regulatory requirements and are not to be used as a replacement for specific legislative or regulatory requirements.

June 2, 2005

Revised: April 8, 2010

## **A: STRUCTURE**

### **1. General**

- Buildings to be used as housing for seasonal occupants should be located in well drained ground at least 30m (100 feet) from any building used or intended to be used for sheltering animals or for poultry husbandry likely to cause offensive environmental conditions or other environmental conditions that may be hazardous to health
- Implement rodent and/or pest control where necessary
- Multiple dwellings (ie. Trailers, portables) are required to have ten meters of space between each

### **2. Construction**

Buildings to be used as housing for seasonal occupants should be weather proof and so constructed that:

- Floors are tight fitting, smooth-surfaced, impervious to moisture and readily cleanable.
- Walls are tight fitting and the interior is lined with a smooth painted or treated surface material.
- Roofs are tight fitting and waterproof.
- Adequate lighting and ventilation are provided at all times by either natural or artificial means, or a combination of these.
- Screens on all openings to the outside are provided between the first days of May to the first day of November.
- Total usable floor area of 7.44m<sup>2</sup> (80-sq. ft.) per person with a minimum of 8.5 m<sup>3</sup> (300 cu. ft) of air space per person in the sleeping area. The floor area in the washrooms is not considered to be useable living area and will not be included in the calculation of useable floor area.
- Walls should extend minimum of 2.13 m (7 feet) to a maximum of 2.44 m (8 feet) above floor level. Walls may be higher but 2.44 m (8 feet) will be used for calculation of airspace in the sleeping areas.
- A minimum temperature of 20<sup>0</sup> Celsius (68<sup>0</sup> F) can be maintained.
- Safety hazards are eliminated and housing is detached from any building where highly flammable materials are used or stored.
- Where combustion-type stoves or heaters are used, they should be vented directly to outside air.
- No toilet room or combined toilet room and wash room opens directly into any room used for the preparation, storage or serving of food.
- Mobile homes should have skirting (rodent control)

Current Ontario Building Code, a regulation made under the Ontario Building Code Act, applies to all new construction and renovations or additions to existing buildings. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that such construction is in compliance with the Ontario Building Code. This document does not identify all applicable provisions of the Ontario Building Code. Contact the municipal building department for additional information.

## **B: Sleeping Facilities**

### **1. Bunkhouses**

Each bunk to be:

- Separate with a suitable amount of space above / below each bunk, and sleep only one person.
- At least 30 cm (12 inches) above the floor
- Provided with a clean pillow and mattress of sound construction.
- At least 46 cm (18 inches) apart from the next bunk when not lying lengthwise along the walls
- Provided with a minimum of 8.5 m<sup>3</sup> (300 cubic feet) of air space per person.
- Provided with one locker or one shelf for each bunk or the equivalent.
- A supply of clean blankets, sheets and pillow cases must be provided upon arrival
- Bedrooms are required to have a wall separating them from other living areas

### **2. Family Housing**

When a building's intended use as housing for seasonal occupant is in the form of family housing, there should be:

- A maximum occupancy rate of one person per 7.44 m<sup>2</sup> (80 sq. ft) of total usable floor area,
- At least 8.5 m<sup>3</sup> (300 cubic feet) of airspace per person in sleeping rooms.
- Children under six years to considered for these purposes as one-half
- A kitchen with food storing, preparing and cooking facilities should be provided and this space should not be used as a sleeping room
- Basic furnishing such as table, chairs and beds compatible with the maximum occupancy

Bedrooms are required to have a wall separating them from other living areas

## **C: Washroom Facilities and Sewage Disposal**

- Fly-tight, weatherproof, well-ventilated toilet accommodation should be provided for every ten occupants or part thereof.
- 1 washbasin for every seven occupants.
- 1 shower for every ten occupants.
- Toilet facilities must have suitable privacy barriers.
- Flush toilets are to be kept in good repair and operate efficiently.

- Toilet tissues should be provided to all toilet accommodations.
- No toilet room or combined toilet room and wash room opens directly into any room used for the preparation, storage or serving of food.
- Portable privies should be under a service contract and must be equipped with hand sanitation facilities such as wet wipes/alcohol solution.
- All sewage is to be disposed of in a manner consistent with the provisions of the Building Code Act and Regulations.

#### **D: Occupancy Calculation**

- Occupancy of a facility is to be calculated on the lesser number of
  - 8.5 cubic metres (300 cubic feet) per person in a sleeping area
  - 7.44 square metres (80 square feet) per person of total usable floor area which includes living and sleeping area but does not include washrooms.
- Note: living, sleeping, kitchen facilities and washroom facilities can be located in separate buildings but need to be conveniently located for easy access.
- 1 washbasin for every seven occupants
- 1 shower for every 10 occupants
- 1 toilet “facility” for every 10 occupants

#### **E: Laundry facilities**

- At least one laundering tub for every fifteen bunks or the equivalent.
- Drying facilities for laundry
- Or access to a Laundromat once per week
- At least one laundering tub for every fifteen bunks or the equivalent

#### **F: Water Supply**

- Housing for seasonal occupants must be provided with a readily available supply of bacteriological safe water, sufficient to provide for drinking, washing, food preparation and laundering. Best management practices of well-head protection to maintain safe water supply.
- Readily available hot and cold water
- When drinking water is provided in a container, it must be bacteriological safe. The container should be clean, sanitary, covered and equipped with a sanitary dispensing device
- A separate drinking vessel must be provided for each occupant

## **G: Food**

- Food shall be stored so that it is protected from contamination.
- All hazardous foods are to be stored in adequate refrigeration to maintain a temperature not exceeding 4°C (40°F).

### **1. Where food is being prepared and served as part of the accommodation:**

- If food is being prepared for 10 or more occupants the Food Premises Regulation 562 applies to the food preparation area.
- If food is being prepared for less than 10 occupants, the food preparation area is exempt from the Food Premises Regulation 562.
  - No cups, glasses or dishes that are chipped or cracked shall be supplied / used in the preparation, service and storage of food.
  - No utensil in such a condition as to prevent its effective cleansing and sanitizing shall be used in the preparation, service and storage of food.
  - Facilities to be supplied for washing dishes / utensils in water at a temperature of not less than 43°C (110°F) containing a detergent solution capable of removing all grease, and food particles, etc.
  - Dishes/utensils to be:
    - i. Sanitized by an acceptable method.
    - ii. Dried by exposure to air.
  - Equipment and appliances in the food preparation and dining areas shall be constructed as to permit the maintenance of these areas in a clean and sanitary condition.
  - Kitchen and dining areas should be kept free from material and equipment that are not regularly used in a kitchen or a dining area.

### **2. When occupants are preparing food for their own use within seasonal housing:**

- Food storage and refrigeration facilities should be provided.
- Provide and adequate:
  - Amount of kitchenware (plates, cups, bowls, knives, forks, spoons, etc)
  - Number of pots and pans,
  - Number of stoves and refrigerators,
  - Amount of cupboard and food storage space,
  - Number of kitchen table(s) and chairs, and
  - Number of utensils for cooking and serving food for the number of occupants being housed

**H: Garbage**

- Rodent and insect proof garbage containers which can readily be cleaned and sanitized should be provided for all buildings used for housing seasonal occupants and in sufficient quantity to store all garbage accumulated between collections
- Garbage shall be collected and removed for sanitary disposal at least once every week

**I: Safety**

- Buildings used for housing seasonal occupants shall comply with the provisions of the Ontario Fire Code. It is the responsibility of the owner/operator to ensure that the facility is compliant with the Fire Code.
- Buildings used for housing seasonal occupants and their surroundings should be free from any chemical substances or condition, which may become hazardous to the occupants.
- Fire extinguisher to be fully charged, have a recent certificate that they have been recharged, properly located, securely mounted. Minimum requirement is ABC rating. (Note: This is a safety protocol. The Health Unit does not enforce the fire code. (<http://www.ofm.gov.on.ca/english/legislation/codeopin/6-2-7-1.asp>)
- Smoke alarm(s) are to be provided, properly located, operational and securely mounted. (Note: this is a safety protocol. The Health Unit does not enforce the fire code. (<http://www.ofm.gov.on.ca/english/Fire%20Safety%20&%20Public%20Education/Working%20Smoke%20Alarms%20Its%20the%20Law/2006/Information%20Card.asp>)