

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Social Distancing Protocols and Employee Protective Measures for Valley Water Field Staff



These safety protocols are intended to provide field staff guidance to comply with Valley Water's Employee Communications Directives, Social Distancing Protocols, & Employee Protective Measures, and Public Health Orders during the pandemic. These protocols do not include, and are not a substitute for, specific job-related safety requirements that may require specialized skills, knowledge, abilities and training. These protective measures are solely for the prevention of contracting or transmitting COVID-19 while working in the field.

During this rapidly changing situation, as Public Health Orders are changed or lifted, Valley Water will amend and/or provide additional information and protocols for the phasing in of Valley Water operations. It should be expected that social distancing, cleaning and disinfecting practices and personal protective equipment recommendations will continue for some time after the shelter in place order is lifted.

Apart from reviewing the information noted in this document, staff should stay informed of the latest employee safety recommendations by regularly checking the [Coronavirus Resource Information](#) for the latest updates.

Effective April 24th 2020, and continuing until further notice, Valley Water issued a notice directing any persons entering a Valley Water facility, to wear a protective face covering. This was implemented as a precautionary measure that is in line with recommendations from the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) and the Santa Clara County Public Health Department

Outdoor workers are highly encouraged to wear a mask at all times while in public, and if you are working within 6 feet of others, a face covering is required. There are times during physical exertion activities that make it a lot more difficult to breathe when you're wearing a face covering, and unless there is a Cal/OSHA mandate for respiratory protection for those activities, employees do not need to wear those face coverings that are inhibiting their breathing as long as social distancing is maintained. If you are driving alone in a vehicle, no protective face covering is required. Currently, in addition to State requirements, the following Bay Area cities/counties are requiring the use of a protective face covering by all persons while in public:

- Fremont
- Pleasant Hill
- Milpitas
- Cupertino
- Alameda County
- Contra Costa County
- Marin County
- San Francisco County
- San Francisco County
- San Mateo County
- Sonoma County
- The City of San Jose
- The County of Santa Clara

In addition to the state requirements, please take note of these cities and counties, and comply with the applicable public health order that has the strictest requirements. To ensure compliance, wear a face covering while in public at all times, to the greatest extent possible.

* A **protective face covering** is a cloth, bandana, or other type of material that covers an employee's mouth and nose. In contrast, a mask is usually defined as either a filtering face piece respirator, such as an N95, or a specialized medical-grade surgical mask

Field Safety Protocols



1. Do not come to work or enter Valley Water facilities if you have any signs or symptoms of illness.
2. Wear a protective face covering when entering a Valley Water facility. Staff may comply with this directive by using personal protective face coverings or masks rather than the protective face coverings furnished by Valley Water.
3. Unless working in an enclosed room alone and with the door closed, eating or drinking, or otherwise exempt, a protective face covering is required to be worn inside all Valley Water facilities.
4. If medical concerns or health issues interfere with wearing a face covering, notify your Unit Manager immediately and initiate an interactive process with Valley Water's Reasonable Accommodation coordinator.
5. Continually observe your work distances in relation to other staff, maintaining a 6-foot distance at all times, if possible.
6. Follow proper sneezing and coughing etiquette; sneeze or cough into a cloth or tissue, or, if not available, into one's elbow; and do not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact.
7. Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, if available. Hand sanitizer can be used, if soap and water are not available. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your face and common surfaces with bare hands.
8. Avoid traveling to jobsites with more than one person per vehicle. If traveling in separate vehicles is not possible, follow PPE recommendations for breaking the 6-foot social distance.
9. Motor pool vehicles are being cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis. Employees who reserve vehicles on an extended basis, or are assigned vehicles, are required to self-clean/wipe down high touch surfaces of their assigned vehicles.
10. Conduct regular tailgate discussions/briefings to review social distancing protocols and other related coronavirus precautions. Coronavirus-related Employee Communications are published frequently based on CDC and County Health guidance.
11. Ensure you regularly clean and maintain reusable face coverings and additional PPE issued. Do not loan or share PPE items.
12. Do not share phones, utensils, food items, or other similar items.
13. Maintain social distancing or wear a face covering and/or mask while operating a boom lift, scissor lift, or other similar types of equipment where workers may be required to share a standing/working platform.
14. Ensure that all tools and equipment are wiped with disinfectant when transferred to another employee; and, that equipment common touch areas are disinfected upon change of operator (such as water cooler push buttons, equipment controls, etc.). If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent with soap and water prior to disinfection. The Winfield Warehouse carries approved disinfection solutions for cleaning equipment.
15. Used masks, disposable PPE, paper towels, and other similar wastes can be thrown in the regular trash. If signs and symptoms of illness, consider sealing in a plastic bag before discarding. Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water after discarding.
16. If jobsites are equipped with portable handwashing facilities and/or jobsite toilets, arrange for them to be cleaned and disinfected at least daily.
17. Prohibit gatherings of any size, even during meal and rest breaks. Gatherings of any kind must be reserved for essential meetings only.

NOTE: If 6 feet of physical distance cannot be maintained when working frequently near others, i.e., more than transient interactions, then the use of Personal Protective Equipment is needed.

- Goggles, face shield, or (safety glasses with side shields when others are also wearing face coverings).
- Face coverings should be worn at all times and are required when working frequently within 6 feet.
- Rubber gloves – Nitrile, latex, etc., are recommended, not required, if working frequently, and in close proximity to others (closer than 6 feet).

Coronavirus Signs & Symptoms

Coughing

Fever

Shortness of breath,
difficulty breathing

Early symptoms may
include chills, body aches,
sore throat, or headache



If you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, **DO NOT COME TO WORK** and call your healthcare provider immediately.

Cleaning & Disinfecting



PPE Requirements:

- Wear disposable gloves and safety glasses with side shields for all tasks in the cleaning/disinfection process.
- Additional PPE might be required, such as chemical goggles, based on the cleaning/disinfectant products being used and whether there is a risk of splash. Follow the instructions on the label and SDS to ensure safe and effective use of the product.

Cleaning:

- Remember to put on appropriate PPE before cleaning and/or disinfecting.
- Cleaning with soap and water reduces the number of germs, dirt and impurities on the surface. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces.
- Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.
- High-touch surfaces in common areas should be cleaned and disinfected frequently.

Vehicles:

At a minimum, clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces in the vehicle at the beginning and end of each shift. Doors and windows should remain open when cleaning the vehicle.

- Remember to put on appropriate PPE before cleaning and/or disinfecting.
- For hard non-porous surfaces within the interior of the vehicle such as hard seats, arm rests, door handles, seat belt buckles, light and air controls, doors and windows, and grab handles, clean with detergent or soap and water if the surfaces are visibly dirty, prior to disinfectant application.

Hygiene Requirements:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Always wash immediately after removing gloves and after physical contact with anyone.
- Hand sanitizer can be used, if soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.

Disinfecting:

- The Winfield Warehouse carries a variety of approved disinfection solutions.
- Follow the instructions on the label and SDS to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- Many products recommend:
 - Keeping surface wet for a period of time (see product label).
 - Making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

Please contact [Jesse Ruiz](#) at X3209 with any questions regarding these protocols.

