

Agricultural Labor Housing RAC

May 31, 2023 / 10am-12pm

Meeting held via Zoom

1. Opening/welcome – Sarah Rew

Attendee's list:

Sarah Rew, Greig Lowell, Dave McLaughlin, Theodore Bunch, Kate Ryan, Barbra Anderson, Malinda Polk, Ann Billette, Bill Anderson, Brian Clark, Alan Martinez, Carly Holzschuh, Jon Laraway, Maria Venegas, Candy Carnes, Erin Roby, Jackie Hernandez, Jaylee Ira Cuello- Martinez, Jen Seamens, Kate Suisman, Lauren Kuenzi, Martha Sonato, Matt Borman, Mike Omeg, Michael Sterner, Mike Doke, Nargess Shadbeh, Nicole Mann, Scott Dilley, Tim Mahern-Macias, ZimmerCL

2. Legislative update: Greig Lowell

- a. House Bill 2001 – signed into law. \$5 million available for on-farm housing improvements. Connected to current Oregon OSHA rulemaking.
- b. HB 3555 – currently in the House Ways & Means Committee. \$10 million available for community-based housing.
- c. Senate Bill 1052 – currently in the House Ways & Means Committee. Came out of the labor trafficking taskforce.
- d. HB 3098 – currently in the House Ways & Means Committee. Additional farmworker outreach through Oregon Department of Agriculture regarding.
- e. SB 592 – recently signed by the governor. Has changes to Oregon OSHA's penalty structure; changes to comprehensive inspections; violations connected to fatalities on the job. Anticipated rulemaking on SB 592 in summer and fall.
- f. HB 907 – awaiting governor signature. Codifying the right to refuse dangerous work. Anticipated rulemaking on HB 907 in summer and fall.

3. April meeting recap: posting of water testing results, space heaters, CO alarms, posting directions

4. Draft language review:

a. Definition of family unit (re: provision of beds for each occupant or family unit); discuss cleanable mattress covers, and bunk ladders

- i. The group discussed bed provisions and the importance of clarifying that each person have their own bed, with flexibility to accommodate couples and families. Members expressed concern about safety of bunk beds and access (ladders). Members were in agreement that cleanliness of mattresses was important, but not fumigation (cleanable mattress covers are a better solution). Conversation also occurred regarding lockable personal storage.

b. Increase water testing / add arsenic and nitrate

- i. The group discussed the need for continued collaboration with OHA to determine water quality standards. In addition, the group discussed definitions and information contained in the following document - [Determining Public Water](#)

[System Classification](#) (Daniel Hough, Small Water System Compliance Specialist, OHA).

c. Toxic chemicals used for insect/rodent control: Theodore Bunch, Oregon OSHA Technical Specialist

- i. Ted Bunch introduced himself to the group and shared the following information.
 1. Chemicals that are not *at least* toxic to the pest they are meant to target will not be effective. (That being said, [IPM](#) (Integrated Pest Management) principles would recommend starting with the least toxic chemical first).
 2. Risk is a function of (1) toxicity of the chemical, and (2) exposure. It doesn't matter whether it is human, animal, or environmental exposure.
 3. The pesticide label is a legal agreement.
 4. The word "toxic" is not very specific; perhaps more useful language would be that chemicals used in housing must be appropriate for home use.
 5. Consider how frequently a chemical is used, rotation (to different products), air quality and ventilation in a household setting.

d. Repair or replace broken fixtures

- i. The group discussed fixtures and appliances that may be present in housing that do not meet rule requirements - and the need to work closely with consultants before occupancy to ensure housing isn't registered without meeting the rule.

e. Increase registration time to 60 days before occupancy

- i. The group held conversation about increasing registration time, though a clear connection to worker safety/health was not made clear. A recommendation was made that only Oregon OSHA staff conduct pre-occupancy inspections (a current MOU has both Oregon OSHA and OED conducting them). A member requested we consider what is practiced in Washington which has sites visited once per year – and voiced frustration that in Oregon inspections occur every time rooms or housing switches hands (which is very time consuming).

f. Provide recycling

- i. The connection between a recycling rule and worker safety/health remained unclear. Some stated that workers sometimes keep bags or bins of cans (for deposit) and expressed desire that this not be considered "garbage" under our rules.

5. New topics/parking lot items:

- Consider requiring inspections *after* occupancy.
- Desire to know when buildings were built and modified.

6. Next meeting: June 28, 2023 (main topic is kitchens)