

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH BRANCH

Occupational Health Watch: July 2016

August is Valley Fever Awareness Month

People who work outdoors in California's Central Valley and other locations, especially workers who dig or disturb soil, are at risk for Valley Fever. Valley Fever is caused by inhaling fungal spores found in the soil in certain parts of the Southwest U.S., including the Central Valley.

Valley Fever symptoms are often like the flu. They include fever, night sweats, fatigue, cough, chest pain, headache, skin rash, and joint aches. Serious illness can occur, resulting in hospitalization, long-term disability, or even death.

Employers in affected areas can take steps to protect workers from breathing in the fungal spores that cause Valley Fever (also called coccidioidomycosis). These include controlling dust, providing worker training, and suspending outdoor work during heavy winds.

For August, CDPH adds a new poster (PDF) for employers of outdoor workers to its resources for preventing work-related Valley Fever. OHB is also partnering with other CDPH programs to promote Valley Fever Awareness Month in California by providing more information and resources through social media.

Photo: Workers guide an earth mover at a dusty work site.



Resources

Outdoor workers & Valley Fever poster (PDF)

Work-related Valley Fever web page

CDPH Valley Fever web page

Cal/OSHA Valley Fever prevention web page

Email Occupational Health Watch (OHW@cdph.ca.gov) with feedback or change of address.

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