

# Cal/OSHA issuing more first-aid kit citations

The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health—known as Cal/OSHA—is issuing more citations to employers that violate a General Industry Safety Order requiring employers’ first-aid materials to be approved by a consulting physician.

While many employers maintain first-aid kits at their workplaces, they may only comply with federal OSHA requirements, not the more stringent Cal/OSHA rules. Unless your kit contains a note from a “consulting physician” approving it, the kit may be in violation of California law.

California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 3400 (c) states, “There shall be adequate first-aid materials, *approved by the consulting physician*, readily available for employees on every job.” (Emphasis added.)

To justify the citations, Cal/OSHA has argued that the hazard associated with lack of approval by consulting physicians is that personal medications or unauthorized drugs may be placed inside first-aid kits.

In fact, Cal/OSHA may be issuing more first-aid kit citations in part because of efforts to remove the requirement for consulting physician approval.

However, until the rule is changed, employers should be aware of this uptick in enforcement and ensure that workplace first-aid kits comply with California law. Obtaining approval can be as straightforward as sending a physician a letter outlining the contents of your kit and asking the physician to review it and sign for approval.