



TAKE 5

Five Minute Safety Talks

Emergency Showers and Eyewash Stations

Emergency showers and eyewash stations can immediately decontaminate the eyes and skin after exposure to hazardous substances, such as corrosive liquids, which can cause injury. This equipment is necessary to minimize the effects of accidental exposure to chemicals.

How long should the contact area be rinsed/flushed?

- If the nature of the contaminant is not known, flush for at least 20 minutes.
- The flushing time for known chemicals is:
 - 5 minutes for non-irritants or mild irritants.
 - 15-20 minutes for moderate to severe irritants and chemicals that cause acute toxicity when absorbed through the skin.
 - 30 minutes for most corrosives.
 - 60 minutes for strong alkalis.
- If irritation persists after the initial flushing period, repeat the flushing procedure.
- Always seek medical attention as soon as possible after first aid has been given.

What specification apply to emergency showers and eyewash stations?

- The emergency shower should deliver a pattern of water with a diameter of at least 20 inches (50.8 centimeters) at 60 inches (152.44 cm). This ensures that the water will come in contact with the entire body. The minimum volume of spray should be 20 gallons per minute (75.7 liters/minute).
- Emergency showers should be designed to be activated in less than one second without the operator's hand on the valve.
- Eyewash stations should deliver fluid to both eyes simultaneously at a volume of not less than 0.4 gallons per minute (1.5 liters/minute).
- Eyewash station nozzles need to be protected from contaminants. The covers should not require a separate motion by the user when the unit is activated.
- Water temperature should be between 60- and 100-degrees Fahrenheit (16-38 degrees Celsius).

What about personal eyewash stations (eyewash bottles)?

- Personal eyewash stations, such as eyewash bottles, do not take the place of fixed eyewash stations. Their purpose is to supply immediate flushing. Once accomplished, the user should proceed to the nearest plumbed or self-contained eyewash station.
- Their contents do expire. Each personal eyewash station (bottle) has an expiration date printed on the container/unit.

How often should equipment be inspected?

- Emergency showers and eyewash stations should be inspected weekly. Weekly activation ensures that there is flushing fluid available, clears the supply line of sediments, and minimizes microbial contamination caused by sitting water.



*For more information consult ANSI Z358
Emergency Eyewash and Shower Standard*

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Name of Presenter: _____

Acknowledgement:

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