

Environmental Health & Safety Topic

EMERGENCY EYEWASHES AND SHOWER STATIONS

An easily accessible, properly working emergency eyewash and shower station is critical at worksites that potentially expose the eyes or body to injurious corrosive materials.

It's all about location.

Emergency eyewashes and showers must be easily accessible to workers. The American National Standards Institute recommends that a worker be able to reach a station in 10 seconds. Having this emergency equipment even closer, as an injured victim may not be able to see. In addition, emergency eyewashes and showers should be identified with a highly visible sign in a language that all workers can understand.

Other tips:

- ✓ Keep the area where the emergency eyewash or shower is located well-lit.
- ✓ Keep the equipment as close to the hazard as possible and in a place where a worker will not encounter a door, stairs, machinery or other potential hazards.
- ✓ Place emergency eyewashes or showers in an area where additional contamination will not occur.
- ✓ Ensure a drainage system is in place for excess water to run off.

Emergency eyewash and shower stations provide immediate decontamination and allow workers to flush away hazardous substances, as well as put out clothing fires or flush contaminants off clothing.



Use the right unit

Emergency showers are designed to flush a worker's head and body, not the eyes. These showers should never be used as eyewashes because the high rate or pressure of the water flow could cause injury.

Similarly, eyewash stations are meant to flush a worker's eyes only. Although combination units exist, it is highly recommended to evaluate and determine the potential hazards in your workplace and what type of unit is best suited for your facility.