

Chapter 10 –Emergency Eyewash and Shower Equipment

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10.6.1 Inspections of Safety Showers and Eyewashes

10.1 Foreword

Eye washes and safety showers are the first line treatment of accidental contamination of the eyes and body of employees working with hazardous materials. There is a need for the employees to know how and when to use this equipment. Proper and immediate use of this equipment can help prevent permanent damage to the injured.

10.2 Introduction

California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 5162 regulations for safety showers and eyewashes.

10.3 Scope

This policy applies to employees who work in areas with potential contact with hazardous materials.

10.4 Use of Eye Washes and Safety Showers

When ever an employee gets contaminated by liquid hazardous materials and the materials can not be readily removed by washing the employee's hands or the material is splashed into the employee's eyes, the eye wash and / or the safety shower must be used.

10.4.1 Contamination of the Hands

A person whose hands are contaminated should wash their hands with copious amounts of water. The use of cold water and the avoidance of scrubbing of the hands prevent the contaminant from entering the skin. Depending on the contaminant, the injured may need to be taken to US Healthworks for evaluation.

10.4.2 Contamination of the Eyes and Face

Immediately place the injured's face above the fountains in the eye wash receptacle. Push the handle to activate the water stream. Keep the injured's face in the eye wash for *at least 15 minutes*. Call 911 for emergency medical service.

10.4.3 Contamination of the Body

Immediately place the person under the safety shower. Remove clothes at and below the affected area. Clothing will act as a wick and hold the chemicals close to the body. This is an emergency situation and the treatment of the injured is the utmost of importance. If the head, face or eyes are contaminated put the injured's face in the eyewash and turn on the water. Keep the person in the shower and eyewash for *at least 15 minutes*. Call 911 for emergency medical service.

10.4.4 Handling the Injured

During any emergency, an injured person may be hysterical and / or combative. If the person has contamination to the face and eyes, s/he probably will not be able to see. Talk calmly and assure the s/he that you are there to help them. Be aware that the injured may try to pull you into them. Guide the injured to the eye wash and / or safety shower at arm's length. Push and pull the levers to activate the flow of water. Keep him/her under

the water for at least 15 minutes and call 911 for emergency medical service. Note: Water in most eyes washes and safety showers is uncomfortably cold. Persons many times will ask to get out of the water. Assure the person that s/he needs to stay in the water. Fifteen minutes will seem like a tremendously long time to the injured.

10.5 Roles and Responsibilities

10.5.1 Agencies and Departments

Each agency and department is required to purchase and install eye wash and / or safety shower equipment as needed.

10.5.2 Safety Coordinator

Insures that eye wash and / or safety showers are installed and maintained. The Safety Coordinator needs to assure that the equipment is inspected on a monthly basis. The Safety Coordinator needs to also assure that the safety shower and / or eyewash is located in area that is physically clear of all obstructions. This area also needs to be safe from electrical and other hazards. The Safety Coordinator also needs to verify that the safety shower and / or eyewash are not near a drain or the drain of the equipment is not plumed to a drain. Water from this equipment, when used in an emergency will be contaminated with hazardous materials and will constitute an environmental release.

10.5.3 Supervisor

The supervisor(s) of an area where an eyewash and / or a safety shower is installed needs to make sure that the employees are aware of this equipment and its use. The supervisor must make sure that the safety showers and / or eyewashes are clear of materials or hazards on a continuous basis. The supervisor(s) need to inform their employees of the importance of keeping these areas clear and safe.

10.5.4 Employees

All employees need to be aware of all of the areas in their work place where safety shower and / or eyewash locations are in their work areas. They must also keep areas around safety showers and / or eyewashes clear and safe. All employees need to know how to use the eyewashes and / or safety showers in their areas.

10.6 Inspections

10.6.1 Inspections of Safety Showers and Eyewashes

Safety showers and eyewashes need to be inspected on a monthly basis. The Safety Coordinator is to assure that this is done. Areas of inspection are:

- Flow of water: OSHA requires that every safety shower and eyewash has a minimum amount of flow of water.
- Cleanliness of water: Water sitting in pipes for a long time has rust and other sediments. Water in the safety shower or eyewash needs to be run periodically to purge sediments out of the line. Some systems need to be run more often than once a month.

- Cleanliness of the eyewash: Eyewashes should be clean and free of all debris.
- Clearance: Ample clearance in front of eyewashes and safety showers is mandatory. Storage of materials, waste and equipment is prohibited in front of the eyewashes or safety showers.
- Inspection tags: Inspection tags need to be attached to, or near, the safety showers and / or eyewashes. One tag can be used for a combination unit. Water-resistant tags and ink should be used.
- Hazards: No electrical cords can be run in close to the eyewash and / or safety shower. This can pose a shock hazard to people around this equipment during use. All electrical outlets near the safety shower and eyewashes need to be the ground-fault type.
- Drains: The safety shower and / or eyewash may not drain into the sanitary or storm sewer. The exception to this is the sink mounted units.