

## Eyewash Stations and Emergency Showers

### Chemical Hygiene Plan

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When handling hazardous materials in laboratories there are a lot of factors to consider in assuring personnel safety. As a final level of protection, emergency showers and eyewash stations need to remain visible, easily accessible, and reliable. This way, they can sufficiently combat any chemicals or other hazardous materials that may make contact with one's eyes or body.

### Responsibilities:

- **Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)**

EHS performs quarterly flow tests and monthly inspections of all emergency showers. Eyewash stations are inspected, and flow tested monthly. During each inspection EHS will:

- Test the water flow for proper quantity, spray pattern, and good water quality.
- Ensure the unit is the proper height from the floor.
- Ensure the unit is not obstructed.
- Ensure valves are working properly.
- Ensure eyewash nozzle dust covers are kept in place and not clogged.
- Ensure signs are posted.
- Ensure the unit is free of corrosion.

- **Laboratory Personnel: Principal Investigator/Faculty/Instructors**

Laboratory personnel are responsible for activating eyewashes weekly in their spaces; ensuring that access to eyewashes and emergency showers are kept free of clutter and ensuring the eyewash nozzle dust covers are kept in place. If nozzle dust covers are not kept on the eyewash nozzles, dust or other particles can clog the nozzles and effect water flow. This could result in dust or other particles being forced into the eyes when the eyewash is used.

- Initial and date inspection tags located next to eyewash and shower stations each time they have been activated.
- Report any malfunctioning eyewashes and emergency showers to EHS and submit a work request to have the unit repaired. If either the emergency shower or eyewash is not working properly, post a "Do Not Use" sign on the unit to alert others. Notify EHS immediately.

### New Installation:

All new eyewashes stations and emergency showers must be installed in consultation with Facilities and EHS.

## Using Emergency Showers and Eyewash Stations:

Preplan your experiments and include emergency procedures. Identify the locations of the nearest emergency shower and eyewash before working with hazardous chemicals.

In the event of an emergency (chemical spill or splash) where an eyewash or emergency shower is needed, follow these procedures:

- **Eyewash Station:**

1. If you get a chemical in your eyes, yell for help if someone else is in the lab.
2. Immediately go to the nearest eyewash and push the activation handle all the way on.
3. Put your eyes or other exposed area in the stream of water and begin flushing.
4. Open your eyelids with your fingers and roll your eyeballs around to get maximum irrigation of the eyes.
5. Keep flushing for at least 15 minutes or until help arrives. The importance of flushing the eyes first for at least 15 minutes cannot be overstated!
6. If you are alone, call 911 after you have finished flushing your eyes for at least 15 minutes.
7. Seek medical attention.
8. Complete an Injury/Illness Exposure Report.

- **Emergency Showers:**

1. If you get chemical contamination on your skin resulting from an accident, yell for help if someone else is in the lab.
2. Immediately go to the nearest emergency shower and pull the activation handle.
3. Once under the stream of water, begin removing your clothing to wash off all chemicals. In some instances, clothing may not be removed, (although it is best to remove contaminated clothing), it is more important to flush away chemical contamination.
4. Keep flushing for at least 15 minutes or until help arrives. The importance of flushing for at least 15 minutes cannot be overstated!
5. If you are alone, call 911 after you have finished flushing for at least 15 minutes.
6. Seek medical attention.
7. Complete an Injury/Illness Exposure Reporting. Notify EHS.
  - [Injury Report Form](#)

If someone else in the lab needs to use an eyewash station or emergency shower (and it is safe for you to do so), assist them to the emergency shower, activate the eyewash or shower for them, and help them get started flushing using the procedures above and then call 911. After calling 911, go back to assist the person using the shower or eyewash and continue flushing for 15 minutes or until help arrives and have the person seek medical attention.