

Emergency Eyewash & Shower — The 6 Rules That Matter

OSHA 29 CFR 1910.151(c) requires suitable facilities for quick drenching or flushing of the eyes and body wherever workers may be exposed to injurious corrosive materials. The detailed performance specs come from ANSI/ISEA Z358.1.

01

Required where exposure exists

OSHA mandates emergency eyewash and/or quick-drench shower facilities wherever employees may be exposed to injurious corrosive materials. Use the SDS, JHA, and ANSI Z358.1 Appendix B to determine where they are needed.

§1910.151(c) · ANSI Z358.1 App B

02

10 seconds / 55 feet from hazard

Travel time to the unit must be 10 seconds or less from the hazard, on the same level and unobstructed by doors. For strong acids/caustics, locate the unit immediately adjacent to the hazard. Stronger hazards = closer placement.

ANSI Z358.1 §6.4.4, §7.4.4

03

Flush for a full 15 minutes

Eyewashes must deliver at least 0.4 gpm for 15 minutes. Drench showers must deliver at least 20 gpm for 15 minutes. Combination units must meet both simultaneously. Hands-free, stay-on valve actuating in ≤1 second.

ANSI Z358.1 §4.5.1, §4.1.2, §5.4.5, §6.4.5

04

Tepid water — 60° to 100°F (16–38°C)

Flushing fluid must be "tepid" — between 60°F (16°C) and 100°F (38°C). Too cold = users stop flushing early. Too hot = scald injury and increased chemical reactivity. Use thermostatic mixing valves where ambient supply runs outside this range.

ANSI Z358.1 §4.5.6

05

Weekly activation test

Plumbed eyewashes and showers must be activated at least weekly to verify flow, clear sediment, and prevent biological contamination. Self-contained units must be inspected and serviced per the manufacturer. Annual full performance check required.

ANSI Z358.1 §5.5.2, §6.5.5, §7.5.5

06

Train, sign, and keep clear

Train workers on location and use BEFORE exposure. Mark units with highly visible signage. Keep an unobstructed path — nothing stored within or in front of the unit. Hold eyelids open and roll eyeballs during the full 15-minute flush.

ANSI Z358.1 §5.4.6, §6.4.6, §7.4.6 · §1910.151(c)

Need an emergency eyewash/shower placement survey, weekly inspection log, or chemical-exposure JHA?

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