

Eye Wash Station Requirements

Employee safety is an important responsibility that extends beyond simply having the right equipment somewhere in the building. When an accident happens, safety equipment needs to be accessible and operating properly in order to provide the type of emergency treatment capable of avoiding serious injury.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) refers employers to The American National Standards Institute's (ANSI) standard Z358.1 specifically to address minimum selection, installation, operation, and maintenance requirements.

The following checklist is a summary of the provisions of ANSI Z358.1-2014 relating to emergency eyewashes:

Inspection Frequency: Activate all eyewash units at least weekly (Section 5.5.2). Inspect all eyewash units annually for compliance with the ANSI Z358.1 standard (Section 5.5.5).

Location: The eyewash safety station must be located within 10 seconds, approximately 55 feet, from the hazard. The station must also be located on the same plane as the hazard and the travel path to the eyewash must be unobstructed. If the hazard includes strong acids or caustics, the emergency eyewash should be located immediately adjacent to the hazard and a professional should be consulted for further recommendations (Section 5.4.2; B5).

Identification: The area around the eyewash station must be well-lit and the unit must include a highly visible sign (Section 5.4.3).

The safety station washes both eyes simultaneously and the water flow allows the user to hold the eyes open without exceeding 8" above the spray heads (Section 5.1.8).

Spray heads are protected from airborne contaminants. Covers are removed by the water flow (Section 5.1.3).

The eyewash safety station delivers at least 0.4 gallons of water per minute for 15 minutes (Sections 5.1.6, 5.4.5).

Water flow pattern is 33-53" from the floor and at least 6" from a wall or nearest obstruction (Section 5.4.4).

Unobstructed walkway - The path between the work station and the eyewash station should not be separated by any partition to attain the 10-seconds rule.

An eye/face wash station requires **flushing of 3 gallons per minute (GPM)**, which is 11.4 liters, for a full 15 minutes. There should be larger eyewash heads that can cover both eyes and face or a face spray that can be used when regular size eye wash heads are installed on the unit.

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