

# Emergency Eye Wash Requirements

Are you required to provide eyewash or shower facilities to protect your employees? If you handle lead-acid batteries, or have a maintenance shop with caustic chemicals or lubricants, the answer is yes. OSHA regulations at 29 CFR 1910.151 (c) specify the use of eyewash and/or shower facilities:

*"Where the eyes or body of any person may be exposed to injurious corrosive materials, suitable facilities for quick drenching or flushing of the eyes and body shall be provided within the work area for immediate emergency use."*

The following specifications are taken from the ANSI Z358.1-2004 standard.

## Plumbed and Gravity-Feed Eye Wash

### 1. Heads

- A. Positioned 33"-45" from floor.
- B. Positioned 6" from wall or nearest obstruction.
- C. 0.4 gallons per minute (GPM) for 15 minutes for plumbed units shall provide flushing fluid at 30 PSI.
- D. 0.4 gallons per minute (GPM) for 15 minutes for gravity-feed units.

### 2. Valves

- A. Activate in 1 second or less.
- B. Stay-open valve (leaving hands free).

### 3. Installation

- A. Eyewash equipment shall be located in an area that requires no more than 10 seconds to reach.
- B. The location of the eye wash unit shall be in a well-lit area and identified with a sign.
- C. Eyewash equipment shall be on the same level as the hazard.

### 4. Maintenance and Training

- A. Plumbed eye wash units shall be activated weekly to verify proper operation.
- B. Gravity-feed units shall be maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- C. All employees who might be exposed to a chemical splash shall be trained in the use of the equipment.
- D. All eyewash equipment shall be inspected annually to make sure they meet ANSI Z358.1 requirements.

### Personal Eye Wash:

Personal eye wash units can provide immediate flushing when they are located near the workstations. Personal eye wash equipment does not meet the requirements of plumbed or gravity-feed eye wash equipment. Personal eye wash units can support plumbed or gravity-feed eye wash units, but cannot be a substitute.

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