Eyewash and Safety Shower Guidelines

Introduction

Accidental biological, chemical or hazardous substance exposures can still occur even with good engineering controls use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other safety precautions. As a result, it is essential to provide emergency eyewash stations and/or deluge showers as a necessary backup to minimize the effects of these accidental exposures.

Guidelines

Determining if an eyewash unit or safety shower is needed,

- Audit the workplace and identify the hazardous substances used.
- Consult the first aid sections of the material safety data sheets (MSDS) to review the recommended emergency instructions.
- Consult with Environmental Health and Safety

Good Practices

- Prevent exposures by wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
- All persons who have the potential to be exposed must know the location and operation of eyewash stations and emergency showers.
- The areas surrounding eyewash stations and emergency showers should be clear of any obstructions

In an Emergency:

- Good first aid practice dictates flushing of the eyes and/or skin with tepid flushing fluid for 15 minutes to remove harmful contaminants.
- Remove all contaminated clothing when using the safety shower.
    - Keep some coveralls and foot covers near the deluge shower in the event that they will be needed.
- It is important to get medical attention as soon as possible after first aid has been given.
    - A physician familiar with procedures for treating biological, chemical or hazardous substance contamination of the eyes and body should be consulted.
- Report the incident using the University of Guelph Incident Reporting process [1].

Operation and Maintenance:

- Plumbed eyewash stations shall be visually inspected and activated weekly for a period long enough (usually 3 minutes) to verify operation, ensure that flushing fluid is available, and clear the “dead leg” portions of the supply line.
    - One person in the work area should be designated responsible for performing the weekly activation, and maintaining a signed and dated record.
    - The weekly activation should note if spray pattern, flow and temperature are adequate.
    - Any malfunction or missing parts should be reported through the Physical Resources work order desk noting that it is a health and safety issue.
- Safety Showers are tested on a quarterly basis by Physical Resources.
- Emergency eyewashes, showers, drench hoses and personal eyewash units are not substitutes for primary protective devices and equipment.

- Personal eyewash units and hand-held drench hoses do not meet the ANSI Z358.1-2014 Standard and are not recommended as stand-alone emergency appliances.
    - They are regarded to be first aid support for emergency shower and eyewash units but shall not replace them.

Additionally

- Contact Physical Resources for information about the preventative maintenance program for emergency eyewash and deluge showers.

For more information about emergency showers and eyewash stations contact Environmental Health and Safety at ehs@uoguelph.ca [2].

Source URL:https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/environmental-health-safety-ehs/ehs-programs-policies-guidelines-and-forms/ehs-11

Links
[1] https://www.uoguelph.ca/hr/about-hr/environmental-health-safety-ehs/incident-and-injury-reporting/injury-reporting-process [2] mailto:ehs@uoguelph.ca