

Safety Note #34

EMERGENCY EYEWASH AND SHOWER STATIONS



Agriculture and Natural Resource (ANR) facilities and locations encompass a variety of work environments where injuries to the eyes and skin can potentially occur, including spraying operations, battery charging, shops, laboratories, and pesticide dispensing areas. Emergency eyewash/shower stations are located in or adjacent to areas where the eyes and skin of workers may be exposed to substances that cause corrosion, severe irritation, or permanent tissue damage or which are toxic by absorption.

Video E-073 Safety Showers and Eyewashes is available from the ANR Environmental Health and Safety Library at <http://safety.ucanr.org>.

Cal/OSHA Emergency Eyewash/Shower Station Requirements

- California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 5162 [CCR/8-5162] requires plumbed or self-contained eyewash and shower equipment to meet the requirements of the American National Standards Institute [ANSI] Z358.1-2001 and be provided in work areas where workers' eyes and skin may be exposed to harmful substances. Other requirements include:
 1. Eyewash nozzles shall be protected from airborne contaminants with use of manufacturers' protective nozzle caps and not require a separate motion to operate.
 2. Eyewash/shower stations shall be in accessible locations that remain free of obstructions to their use and require no more than 10 seconds [or a distance of no more than 55 feet] for the injured person to reach.
 3. Eyewash stations shall provide enough room to allow eyelids to be held open with the hands while the eyes are in the stream of water.
 4. Eyewash/shower stations shall be identified with a highly-visible sign.
 5. All employees that may be exposed to chemical injuries shall be instructed in the use of eyewash/shower stations.
- Water hoses, sink faucets, or showers are not acceptable eyewash/shower stations.
- Eyewash/shower stations shall provide not less than 0.4 Gal/Min of water for 15 minutes at a velocity that does not injure the user.
- The eyewash/shower station control valves shall remain on without the use of the injured person's hands.
- Eyewash/shower stations shall be inspected and activated monthly to flush the line and verify proper operation. Documentation of inspections is required (a form to document inspections is provided at <http://safety.ucanr.org/files/3065.pdf>).

Note – CCR/8-5162 does not pertain to pesticide handlers and applicators conducting field work. See [Safety Note # 159 Pesticide Handler Decontamination Facilities](#).

Emergency Use of Eyewash/Shower Stations

- Activate the eyewash or shower, seek available assistance, and begin flushing the exposed area for at least 15 minutes. Hold eyelids open and roll eyeballs during flushing.
- After flushing, promptly seek medical attention for tissue damage or exposures to harmful substances.

It is important that employees [and others] know the locations and how to properly operate eyewash stations. Always use goggles or face shields to prevent eye injuries.