

**NC State University
Environmental Health and Safety Center
Emergency Eyewash Fact Sheet**

Eyewash stations are necessary protections for all laboratories utilizing chemicals hazardous to human eyes. Eyewash is considered as a first aid measure rather than a preventative one. Proper exposure control methods, including eye protection is always required to minimize eye exposure to hazardous chemicals. To provide adequate protection, emergency eyewash stations need proper use and maintenance. PIs/supervisors need to train all students/employees on the location and proper use of eyewash stations. Eyewash installations must meet the ANSI Z358.1 guidelines for plumbed and self-contained eyewash stations

ANSI –Approved Eyewash stations

ANSI-Approved eyewash station in general is a plumbed or self-contained eyewash that:

- a. Delivers low-pressure water at 0.4 gallons/min for at **least 15 minutes**.
- b. Provides flushing water to both eyes simultaneously
- c. Is within **10-second** reach (walking) with a path of travel, which is **not obstructed** and does not require opening doors or passing through obstacles.
- d. Where chemicals such as carcinogens or highly corrosive chemicals are used, eyewash stations may be necessary to be installed immediately adjacent to the hazard.
- e. Has a valve actuator, which is easy to locate/use and **remains activated** until intentionally closed. User shall be able to **use both hands** to hold the eyelids open in flushing stream
- f. Uses tepid (lukewarm) water
- g. Eyewash shall be identified with a highly visible sign. The area around the facility should be well lighted and highly visible.



Personal eyewashes (e.g. eyewash bottles) and drench hoses only provide support for emergency eyewash stations and emergency safety showers and shall not replace them.

Lab responsibility

- a. Keep eyewash stations clean, visible, and free from any obstruction
- b. Activate eyewash stations **weekly** (contain water for eyewash stations that are not connected to the building drain system)
- c. Maintain a weekly test logbook, which is readily available or posted close to the eyewash station
- d. Report any damage/malfunction to Facility Operations
- e. Assign a responsible person/group to test eyewash stations installed in the hallways.
- f. Follow the manufacturer instructions for proper maintenance of self-contained eyewash stations (e.g. eyewash bottles). Do not store eyewash liquids beyond their expiration date.

* For more information please contact Environmental Health and Safety at 513-1282 or email: mahdi_fahim@ncsu.edu