How to Use an Eyewash – Stats & Facts



FACTS

1. Sufficient and properly working emergency eyewash and shower devices in the workplace are vital for easing eye and skin injuries. However, this equipment is not a substitute for safety eyewear, face shields, protective clothing, or other personal protective gear designed to prevent employees' exposure to chemical, physical, or biological agents.
2. Liquids present the most common hazards, but solids, gases, vapors and mists also may present. A material may be considered hazardous if it can damage the skin or eyes or if it is readily absorbed through the skin.
3. In general, adequate eye and face protection and protective clothing must be provided if an eyewash or eyewash and shower is required. The use of personal protective equipment does not change the requirement for an eyewash or shower. In general, tight-fitting goggles should be worn if eye protection is required against liquid splashes, sprays, mists or vapors. Shields or safety glasses do not provide adequate splash protection unless the face shield meets the requirements under ANSI Z87.1-2015 and is marked "D3."
4. Eyewash stations used in workplaces must be maintained to prevent injury and illness to workers. Eyewash stations are critical emergency safety equipment intended to mitigate eye injuries when control methods do not prevent exposure to a physical or chemical irritant or a biological agent. The ANSI standard for eyewashes specifies that eyewashes must be capable of delivering tepid flushing fluid to the eyes not less than 1.5 liters per minute (0.4 gpm) for 15 minutes after a single movement and subsequent hands-free operation. Whether the eyewash station is permanently connected to a source of potable water (i.e., plumbed) or has self-contained flushing fluid, improper maintenance may present health hazards that can worsen or cause additional damage to a worker's eye.

STATS

- According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics:
- 11,330 workers were afflicted by chemical exposures in 2019, and
- 18,640 workers suffered eye injuries
- Emergency eyewash is oftentimes overlooked in safety program evaluations. Yet, more than 2,000 occupational eye injuries occur daily, with more than one in ten requiring one or more days away from work, according to Prevent

Blindness America.

- 10 percent to 20 % of all workplace eye injuries result in temporary or permanent vision loss according to OSHA.
- More than 2,000 eye injuries occur on the job every day, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Almost 100,000 each year lead to temporary or permanent vision loss. The cost? The U.S. Department of Labor estimates more than $300 million annually, once factors such as medical expenses, lost production time, and worker’s compensation costs are tallied.