

Safety Shower & Eyewash



ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Self Inspection

What is a safety shower/eyewash

A safety shower/eyewash is a device designed to wash chemicals off a person in the event of a chemical spill. One can find them separately or as a combined unit. Safety shower/eyewash stations can be located in rooms or in hallways. If a room has a shower it likely also has an eyewash.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Keep the area clear

The area around a safety shower/eyewash station should be kept clear of obstructions. For a shower the user should be able to get under the shower head without difficulty.

For sink mounted swing out eyewashes the counter space around the eyewash should be kept clear so the eyewash can be deployed without hitting obstructions.

Remember in an emergency the user may have obstructed vision due to chemicals in their eyes and moving quickly.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Eyewash testing

Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) performs yearly testing of safety shower/eyewash stations during the summer. In addition to this the occupants of lab or adjacent rooms (if station is in a hallway) should perform weekly testing of eyewash stations. This is to ensure proper function of the eyewash station and to flush out sediment buildup and stagnant water. Ideally one should flow the eyewash for one to three minutes.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Self testing

When testing an safety eyewash station one must know how the water flow should look in order to determine when the eyewash has adequate flow. The flow from each nozzle should be six inches long and the flows should cross in the center of the eyewash nozzle mount near there apex. Both streams should be equal.

Think to yourself when testing; “I may have to use the safety eyewash in an emergency, would it actually wash chemicals out of my eyes.”



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison



This is how an eyewash should look. The flows cross in the center of the eyewash and are tall enough that the user would not have to get their eyes extremely close to the eyewash nozzles.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison



This eyewash is deficient. The flow from the nozzles is low. This eyewash is unusable.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison



This eyewash is also deficient. The flows are low don't intersect one another. The flow while low could work in an emergency.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison



This is an ideal example of this kind of flow type. The flows are equal and cross near their apex and at the center of the eyewash mount.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison



This eyewash is deficient. Nozzle flow is low with the flows barely making it to the center of the eyewash mount.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison



This is a good example of the face wash kind of safety eyewash. Flow is good and near uniform with a height of six inches or greater.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison



This eyewash is low flow. Note the difference in flow height vs. the pervious slide based on the sticker in the background.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison



Example of good flow from a dredge hose type of safety eyewash. Note that with this type the water streams don't cross. With handle pointed strait up the streams should be about a foot long from nozzle to apex.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison

So your eyewash is deficient

If your safety eyewash upon testing is deficient inform your lab and/or building manager so the safety eyewash can be repaired.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison

A Note on Safety Showers

Due to the necessary equipment, shower testing is best left to EH&S. If there is a need to test a shower remember that the safety shower should flow at least 20 gallons a minute.

The shower on the left is low flow.



**ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH
AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**
University of Wisconsin-Madison