



ACT Health

Eyewash Station and Emergency Shower Procedure

For managers and workers

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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to inform ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) managers and workers about the requirements for eyewash stations and emergency showers. This procedure supports the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Guideline.

Eyewash stations provide on-the-spot decontamination to flush away hazardous chemicals, infectious material or objects in a person's eye.

Emergency showers provide sufficient water to decontaminate a person's head, body and/or clothing. Emergency showers can also be used to extinguish clothing fires and treat burns.

Objectives

ACTHD will:

- install eyewash stations and emergency showers where:
 - hazardous chemicals that are corrosive are used
 - there is a risk of eye contamination
 - there is a risk of exposure to ionising radiation
 - there is the risk of contamination by, or skin absorption of, biological hazards/infectious substances
 - there is a risk of burns to a large area of the face or body, including chemical or electrical burns or burns that are deep, in sensitive areas or greater in size than a 20 cent piece
- install eyewash stations and emergency showers on the same level and to be accessible by workers within 10 seconds of exposure (or directly next to locations where corrosive hazardous chemicals are used)
- install, inspect, maintain and test eyewash stations in accordance with Australian Standard (AS) 4755-2007 Emergency Eyewash and Shower Equipment
- provide instruction, supervision and training about the use of eyewash stations and emergency showers.

Roles and Responsibilities

Position	Responsibilities
Director-General and Deputy Directors-General, who are officers in accordance with the WHS Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that ACT HD applies appropriate resources and equipment to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ eliminate or minimise WHS risks○ respond promptly to information about incidents, hazards and risks○ comply with the WHS Act and WHS Regulation.
Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ eyewash stations and emergency showers are correctly installed, maintained and inspected○ workers are trained and effectively supervised○ training, equipment and maintenance records are maintained○ exercises are undertaken (in conjunction with the chief warden) to test the procedures for using eyewash stations and emergency showers.
People Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and review the ACT HD WHSMS and provide information about WHS requirements.
Strategic Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that eyewash stations and emergency showers are included in the design of workplaces, where required.• Engage contractors to install, maintain and test eyewash stations and emergency showers.
Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete relevant WHS training, including exercises that involve the use of eyewash stations and emergency showers.• Follow safety procedures and instructions, including keeping eyewash stations and emergency showers clear of obstructions.• Participate in consultation processes.

Procedure

Determining Eyewash Station and Emergency Shower Requirements

The workplace design process for ACTHD workplace will consider the hazards that may be present or introduced into the workplace and the specific requirements for the provision of eyewash stations and emergency showers in accordance with the objectives detailed in this procedure.

Eyewash stations and emergency showers are a regular design feature of laboratory and workshop environments.

The facilities to assist workers can consist of:

- an appropriate deluge facility and/or eye wash facility (recommended for workshops and locations with hazardous chemicals)
- a portable, self-contained eye wash or shower unit, which have their own flushing fluid, which needs to be refilled or replaced after use

- a permanently rigged hand-held shower hose
- a hand operated drench hose attached to container of flushing fluid
- a portable plastic or rubber shower hose that is designed to be easily attached to a tap spout for small, relatively low risk workplaces, where a fixed deluge facility would not be reasonably practicable, but the risk of injury is still foreseeable.

A risk management approach will be applied in all cases to determine the requirements for emergency showers and eyewash stations.

Drench hoses, or personal eye irrigation equipment, can be used to supplement, but not replace emergency showers and eyewash stations. Handheld drench hoses are useful in cases where the affected person is in a prone position or where the face is inaccessible. This option is only to be used until the affected person can be moved to an emergency shower/eyewash station.

Eyewash stations and emergency showers must be installed by a licenced plumber and certified that they meet AS 4755-2007 Emergency Eyewash and Shower Equipment. Plumbed emergency showers must be certified to provide a water flow rate of 75.7litres for 17 minutes. Eyewash stations must provide a flow rate of 1.5 litres for 15 minutes. New to service equipment must be tested before it is used, and the licenced plumber must attach a current test tag that confirms that the unit is compliant.

Training

All workers who may require access to an eyewash station or emergency shower must be:

- inducted into the location of the eyewash stations and emergency showers
- receive training and instruction in the in the use of the equipment, including how:
 - to properly activate the specific type of equipment
 - know long to flush their eyes or remain in the shower
 - how to remove contact lenses when using an eyewash station, where required
 - how to hold their eyelids open and roll their eyes continuously when using an eyewash station
 - how to remove contaminated clothing
 - how to safely assist a person who needs to use the equipment.

Knowing how to assist somebody correctly who needs to use an eyewash can a significantly reduce the level of injury that a person may experience, because the person who has had the exposure is likely to experience distress, pain and/or panic.

Testing Emergency Procedures

The workplace must periodically test the procedures for using an eyewash station or emergency shower through a hands-on exercise.

The chief warden, or a manager if the chief warden is not available, will plan for and record each exercise. The ACTHD Workplace Emergency Planning Committee will consider the frequency of exercises.

Consultation

Consultation about eyewash stations and emergency showers will be undertaken in accordance with the ACTHD communication, consultation and co-operation arrangements¹ through:

- WHS committees
- health and safety representatives, and
- workers in business units.

Inspection, Maintenance and Testing of Equipment

The workplace must test and maintain eyewash stations and emergency showers in accordance with the manufacturer's or supplier's instructions and AS 4755-2007 Emergency Eyewash and Shower Equipment, including:

- running a weekly activation test to ensure that the equipment is working
- inspecting and flushing eyewash stations and emergency showers every month (refer to the next section)
- engaging a licenced plumber to undertake an annual flow rate test². The plumber must attach a compliance tag to the eyewash station or emergency shower after the test has been undertaken.

Strategic Infrastructure Branch can assist with the engagement of licenced plumbers to undertake the annual flow rate test.

Defective equipment must be tagged out of service and repaired urgently. Where an eyewash station and emergency shower has been tagged out of service, the workplace must cease to undertake or move hazardous activities to a location that has an emergency shower/eyewash facility.

Monthly Inspections

The monthly inspection of an eyewash station/emergency shower must undertake the following checks:

1. The equipment does not have any broken or damaged parts.
2. Access routes are free of obstructions and trip hazards, including the pathway to the unit.
3. The stations are within 10 seconds of exposure.

1 Refer to section 2 of the WHS Guideline.

2 Plumbed emergency showers must be certified to provide a water flow rate of 75.7litres for 17 minutes. Eyewash stations must provide a flow rate of 1.5 litres for 15 minutes.

4. New workers have been inducted and trained in its use.
5. Protective eyewash covers, where used, are properly positioned, clean, intact and operate correctly when activated.
6. The activation test has been conducted and the:
 - a. water flow is effective and continuous (a test sock should be used)
 - b. water flow was run for long enough to verify operation and to remove any rust or other pipe build up
 - c. the streams of water from an eyewash station do not cross (if they do it may mean that the water pressure is too high)
 - d. water is clear.
7. The unit operates without the person holding the controls.
8. The valve actuator operates within 1 second.
9. The fixtures and fitting are secure and correctly maintained.
10. The unit is well illuminated and identified by a suitable sign. The sign must comply with AS1319-1994 Safety signs for the occupational environment.
11. Written procedures for the operation of the equipment are current.
12. A practical exercise (rather than a desktop exercise) has been undertaken in the last 12 months.
13. The equipment has a current test tag that confirms that a licenced plumber has completed the annual flow rate testing.

Records Management

Business units and managers are required to maintain WHS training and competency documents, equipment inspection testing and maintenance and exercise records as a corporate record.

WHS records must be retained in accordance with the relevant [retention and disposal schedule](#). Records of the testing of eyewash stations must be retained for 7 years after the last action.

Related Documents

Legislation

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011](#)
- [Territory Records Act 2002.](#)

Supporting Documents

- [Work Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Guideline](#)
- [WHS Training and Competency Procedure](#)
- ACT HD [records management policies and procedures](#).
- [Territory Records \(Records Disposal Schedule – Territory Administrative Records Disposal Schedules – Occupational Health & Safety \(OH&S\) Records Approval 2009 \(No.1\)\)](#).

References

- AS 4755-2007 Emergency Eyewash and Shower Equipment
- AS 2243.2:2021 Safety In laboratories Part 2 Chemical aspects and storage
- AS 1319-1994 Safety signs for the occupational environment

Search Terms

Eyewash stations/ Emergency showers

Version Control

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