

## Eyewash and Drench Hoses

The best treatment for chemical splashes to the eye and face is immediate flushing with copious amounts of water for 15 minutes. All plumbed eyewashes and drench hoses should be flushed by laboratory occupants on a weekly basis by allowing the water to flow for approximately 3 minutes to remove stagnant water from the pipes (but check first to make sure that the eyewash is connected to a drain). Plastic eye wash bottles are not recommended and are not considered a substitute for plumbed safety equipment. In general, the emergency eyewash equipment should be installed within 10 seconds walking time from the location of a hazard. The equipment must be installed on the same level as the hazard (accessing the equipment should not require going up or down stairs or ramps). In addition, the path of travel from the hazard to the equipment should be free of obstructions and as straight as possible. Eyewashes must have one-step activation and provide continuous water flow until deactivated by the user. Eyewash flow is checked by EH&S annually.

### Typical Eyewashes

These units provide at least 1.5 gallons per minute of flow for 15 minutes.



### Eye / Face Washes

The same standards apply for these as for eye washes except that the flow rate must be at least 3.0 gallons per minute and the spray pattern is designed to cover more area on the surface of the user's face.



Dust covers (yellow or red plastic caps) should be kept in place when not in use to keep out debris but will automatically be removed by the flow of water upon actuation of the control valve.

The spray nozzles shall be aligned, and the unit positioned to allow safe hands-free use of the device. They must be located at least 6 inches from any surface or obstruction that might cause injury to an individual upon their use in an emergency.

#### **Eye wash / Drench Hose Units**



If installed properly these units may take the place of safety showers, eye washes or eye / face washes. They must meet the standards that apply for these as for fix mounted equipment that they are intended to replace.

These must be mounted so that they will function as intended. If they are intended to be used for eye washing, they must be able to remain securely in their mounting bracket and be used as a hands-free device after activation of the flow control valve.

The hose should easily move so that a user can remove it from its mounting bracket and adequately use it to rinse the body as needed.

Some drench hoses are not designed to function as eye or face washes. They have value but are considered to be supplemental to the required safety equipment per ANSI and OSHA. These should be maintained similar to the other emergency equipment: the areas around these devices should be kept clear to ensure accessibility and they should also be flushed at least weekly to ensure operability and they should be posted with a highly visible sign, however these will not be “certified” so they will not have an attached certification tag.

### Pre-rinse Units



These units are not designed for emergency response.

Be careful not to confuse drench hoses with pre-rinse units (shown here). As can be seen, pre-rinse units are similar in appearance to drench hoses. These are manufactured by the same companies that produce our safety devices. Different coloration (non-painted versus orange, yellow or green), materials (metal versus plastic) and head angles (45 degrees versus straight) are used to try and differentiate the devices based on their intended purpose. Yet, they still have some identical components. The pre-rinse units may also be installed suspended from a hose with an external spring similar to what you might expect to see in a commercial dishwashing facility.

Pre-rinse units are designed to provide a much harder stream of water at a higher velocity in order to remove stubborn residues from dishes or equipment before cleaning. **Use of a pre-rinse unit for flushing personnel may actually exacerbate or cause injuries and they should never be used for this purpose!** Pre-rinse units will neither be posted nor certified by EH&S.