Emergency Eyewash and Safety Showers

Purpose:
The purpose of this policy is to describe the requirements for the inspection and maintenance of emergency eyewash stations and safety showers (equipment) at Boston Medical Center (BMC).

Policy Statement:
It is the Policy of BMC to provide, inspect and maintain emergency eyewash stations and safety showers where required.

Application:
This policy applies to all areas that have emergency eyewash stations, safety showers, or both.

Exceptions:
None

Procedure:

Emergency Eyewash and Safety Shower Requirements
Every area where corrosives or flammable liquids are handled or where open flame devices are used shall be equipped with an emergency eyewash station, a safety shower, or both. EHS will determine the type and location of the equipment. The equipment must be installed in accordance with applicable standards.

Where strong acids or caustics are used, an emergency eyewash station must be installed adjacent to the hazard. The equipment shall be installed as close to the exit door as possible, not obstructing egress, and no greater than 50 feet from the hazard use area. Additionally, the equipment must be reachable within 10 seconds through an unobstructed path of travel on the same level as the hazard.

Safety showers shall be capable of providing a continuous spray of no less than 30 gallons per minute of water for 15 minutes. Emergency eyewash stations shall be capable of providing a continuous supply of water at no less than 0.4 gallons per minute for 15 minutes.

The equipment shall be supplied with tepid water between 70°F and 90°F.
The area around the equipment shall be well lit and the equipment must be indicated by signs of contrasting color, either RED and WHITE or GREEN and WHITE. The signs shall be at least 70 square inches in area bearing the words "EMERGENCY WASH STATION", or "SAFETY SHOWER".

Training
Employees who may be exposed to corrosive or flammable materials shall be instructed in the location and proper use of the equipment by their manager. EHS is available for assistance as requested.

Inspections and Testing
The emergency eyewash station must be flushed by the manager of the area or their designee on a weekly basis following the steps on the bottom of the Weekly Eyewash Station Flush sheet.

The equipment will be inspected and a flow test performed every six (6) months (twice annually) by EHS following these steps:

- Ensure adequate access to, and clearance around the equipment
- Ensure the appropriate identification signage is visible.
- Test the functionality of the on/off valves and levers.
- Check for the appropriate flow rate (30 gallons per minute for a shower and 0.4 gallons per minute for eyewash).
- Identify the appropriate flow pattern as outlined in ANSI Z 358-1 2004.
- Verify water temperature is between 70˚F and 90˚F.
- Inform Facilities of needed repairs by submitting an online service request.

Definitions
- CMR: Code of Massachusetts Regulation.
- Emergency Shower: A device specifically designed and intended to deliver flushing fluid in sufficient volume to cause that fluid to cascade over the entire body.
- Eyewash: A device used to provide flushing fluid water to irrigate and flush the eyes.
- Equipment: for purposes of this policy, Equipment is inclusive of both emergency eyewash stations and safety showers unless specifically stated otherwise.
- Facilities Support Services (Facilities): performs maintenance activities for BMC.
- Potable Water: Water that does not contain impurities in amounts sufficient to cause disease or harmful physiological effects. Its bacteriological and chemical quality shall conform to the pertinent requirements of 310 CMR, the regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection or to the pertinent local Board of Health regulations.
- Tepid: Moderately warm; lukewarm.

Responsibility:
Department Managers
Managers responsible in areas where emergency eyewash stations are located will conduct weekly flushes and complete the weekly inspection check sheet, will maintain clear access to and around the emergency eyewash station and safety shower, will report deficiencies of the equipment to the Control Center or complete an online work request, and will ensure their employees are trained on the location and use of the equipment in their area.

**Environmental Health and Safety (EHS):**
EHS maintains an inventory of the equipment, advises on the proper placement and installation, performs flow test inspections twice annually, and informs Facilities when failed equipment requires repair. EHS will re-inspect failed equipment once Facilities has made repairs.

**Facilities Support Service (Facilities):**
Installs emergency eyewash stations and safety showers as identified, makes repairs to the equipment as reported, notifies EHS when the equipment is repaired, conducts weekly eyewash flushes in areas Facilities is responsible (these areas include but are not limited to; boiler, mechanical and machine rooms), and maintains clear access to and around the equipment in areas where Facilities is responsible.

**Forms:**
- Weekly Eyewash Station Check sheet
- Emergency Eyewash Guidance Document

**Other Related Policies:**

**References:**
- 29 CFR 1910.151 (c) Medical Services and First Aid
- 527 CMR 10.02 Fire Extinguishers
- 248 CMR 10.13 (l) Uniform State Building Code
- ANSI Z358.1 – 2004 Standard for Emergency Eyewash and Shower equipment

**Section: Safety**

**Policy No.: 06.25.000**

**Title:** Emergency Eyewash and Safety Showers

**Initiated by:** Environmental Health and Safety

**Contributing Departments:** Facilities Support Services
WEEKLY EYEWASH STATION CHECK

Location (Building, Unit, Room#): ________________________________

Inspection Day: _________ of every week.  CALENDER YEAR: __________

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WEEKLY FLUSH STEPS

1. Ensure that the eyewash station is easily identifiable and unobstructed.
2. Ensure that the eyewash station activates easily with one-handed control, the flow removes eyepiece covers, and water flows evenly and in a steady stream.
3. Allow the eyewash station to run for 1-3 minutes to flush stagnant water from the line. If this is your first time flushing the station, you may have to run it longer to ensure that the water is clean.
4. If your eyewash station does not have a drain, ensure you use a bucket to capture the water.
5. Complete an online service request for any water flow or unit deficiencies.

Contact Environmental Health and Safety at 638-8830 with questions or if assistance is needed.
To ensure a properly functioning emergency eyewash station with clean water in the event of an emergency, a flush of the eyewash station must be conducted weekly.

**Guidance and Instructions**

When performing a weekly eyewash flush, check the following:

► **Access and signage:** Ensure that the eyewash station is easily identifiable and unobstructed. Carts, chairs, glassware and equipment can all obstruct an eyewash station, which may slow the response in the event of an emergency. If you have to use an eyewash station in an emergency you won’t be able to see very well!

► **Operation:** Ensure that the eyewash station activates easily with one-handed control, the flow removes eyepiece covers, and water flows evenly and in a steady stream.

► **Water:** Allow the eyewash station to run for 1-3 minutes to flush stagnant water from the line. If this is your first time flushing the station, you may have to run it longer to ensure that the water is clean.

Report malfunctioning eyewash stations to the Control Center at 414-4144 or complete an online service request.

**Helpful hints:**

- **Make sure you know where the water drains!** Often a bucket or a tray has to be positioned under the unit’s drain to collect the water.

- **Have a roll of paper towels** on hand in case of water leakage.

- **A large tray may be needed to collect the water** under units that pull down from the wall to activate.

If you have questions or if you are unable to flush your eyewash station, contact Environmental Health and Safety at (617) 638-8830.