

Emergency Eyewash and Safety Shower Equipment Guideline

Section 1 - Purpose and Objectives

(1) This Guideline outlines the requirements for safety shower and eyewash or eye/face wash facilities within University laboratories.

Section 2 - Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Term	Definition
OGTR	Office of the Gene Technology Regulator - governs certified biological facilities where genetically modified work is carried out.
AS/NZS	Australian Standards and New Zealand Standards.

Section 3 - Guideline Scope/Coverage

(2) This Guideline applies to all staff and students at The University of Queensland who work with materials or in facilities that require emergency eyewash and safety shower equipment.

Section 4 - Guideline Statement

(3) To determine what should be installed within a laboratory (i.e. a safety shower and eyewash, or an eye/face wash facility), a risk assessment of the activities and chemicals used in the laboratory should be conducted. For example, should the laboratory use chemicals which are toxic, flammable or corrosive, then a safety shower and eyewash would be warranted. However, should the usage of chemicals be limited to dilute solutions of non-toxic, non-flammable or non-corrosive substances e.g. buffers, an eye/face wash facility should be installed. The latter situation would only apply if the consequences of a splash or spill are minimal or not noticeable.

Section 5 - Requirements

(4) In Australia, the following standards apply to the installation and operation of emergency eyewash and shower equipment:

- AS/NZS 2243.1:2005 Safety in laboratories - planning and operational aspects.
- AS/NZS 2982: 2010 Laboratory design and construction.
- AS 4775: 2007 Emergency eyewash and shower equipment.

(5) The following points relate to emergency eyewash and shower equipment in University laboratories and workshops (for further information on any of these points, refer to the links within this document):

- a. Disposable eyewash bottles are not acceptable for use in any University laboratory. The OGTR will allow single use sterile packs of eyewash irrigation fluid in OGTR-certified PC2 facilities – however, if chemicals are also used in the lab, an emergency eyewash is still required.
- b. There should be no more than 15m unobstructed access or greater than 10 seconds walking time to any emergency eyewash and shower where chemicals are being used.
- c. Delivered water temperature must be moderately warm. Temperature in excess of 38°C is harmful to the eyes and can accelerate chemical reactions. Prolonged contact with cold water can be harmful and discourage use of the equipment.
- d. Emergency equipment needs to be tested weekly by the laboratory occupants to flush the supply and line and verify proper operations. This weekly interval may be varied on the basis of a documented risk assessment.
- e. Installation must meet the manufacturer's requirements including criteria for water pressure, flow rate and system testing. All installations should be plumbed to a potable water supply.
- f. Stay-open valves must be in place and be operable to allow an individual to use both hands to hold eyes open or remove clothing (i.e. hand-held drench hoses support shower and eyewash units, but shall not replace them).
- g. It is preferred that emergency eyewash units be connected to drain piping.
- h. Installing emergency equipment should not be used as a substitute for primary protective devices (e.g. eye and face protection) or for safe procedures for handling hazardous materials.
- i. Employees must be trained in the location and proper use of emergency equipment.

(6) AS/NZS 2982 requires that safety shower, eyewash and eye/face wash equipment shall comply with AS 4775 Emergency Eyewash and Shower Equipment.

Section 6 - Preferred Supplier to the University

(7) It is recommended that University schools purchase 'Broen' emergency eyewash and shower equipment. Broen products meet the requirements of the standards mentioned above. All installation of safety equipment should be arranged through Property and Facilities Division Works Control Centre.

Section 7 - Contacts for Further Information

(8) Occupational Hygiene Advisors: email at hsu@uq.edu.au

(9) University of Queensland Chemicals Store:

- a. website: <https://science.uq.edu.au/about/facilities-services/science-store>
- b. telephone extension: 51418, 52345, or 52528
- c. e-mail at chemwaste@chemistry.uq.edu.au

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Enquiries Contact	Health, Safety and Wellness Division