

# U.S. Department of Labor

Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
Washington, D.C. 20210



July 20, 1992

Mr. Paul R. Naim  
Assistant Director of Safety Construction  
Advancement Program of  
Western Pennsylvania Fund  
2270 Noblestown Road  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15205

Dear Mr. Naim:

Thank you for your inquiry of May 19, addressed to Berrien Zettler, Deputy Director, Directorate of Compliance Programs, requesting an interpretation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standard at 29 CFR 1910.151(c) and its application to the construction industry.

It is a common practice to use general industry standards in construction. OSHA has in fact identified the standard in question as being applicable to construction. Enclosed is the portion of the index of general industry applicable to construction which includes 29 CFR 1910.151(c).

The OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.151(c) requires eyewash and shower equipment for emergency use where the eyes or body of any employee may be exposed to injurious corrosive materials. For details on emergency eyewash and shower equipment we reference consensus standard ANSI Z358.1-1990.

A water hose may be used in conjunction with emergency showers/eyewash stations, but, not as a substitute for them. At locations (construction sites included) where hazardous chemicals are handled by employees **proper eyewash and body drenching equipment** shall be available no more than 100 feet from the work station(s). The employee (who may be partly blinded by chemicals in the eyes) must be able to reach and use **the eyewash and/or body drenching equipment within 10 seconds**. The physical layout of the workplace with specific attention to obstructions such as machine and equipment must be considered in locating eyewash stations.

Any permanently installed emergency shower must be attached to water supply plumbing that is capable of delivering a minimum of 30 gallons (113.6L) of clean water per minute. The water must be dispersed substantially in a spray pattern from the water outlet which must be no less than 60 inches (152.4cm) above the working surface on which the user stands. Emergency shower locations must be identified with a highly visible sign.

A self-contained or portable emergency shower must be capable of delivering a minimum of 20 gallons (75.7L) of clean water per minute continuously for at least 15 minutes. The water must be substantially dispersed in a spray pattern from the water outlet which must be no less than 60 inches (152.4cm) above the working surface on which the user stands. Emergency shower locations must be identified with a highly visible sign.

Installed and portable emergency eyewash units must be capable of delivering not less than 0.4 gallons (1.5L) of clean water per minute. Portable eyewash units must be capable of delivering water continuously for at least 15 minutes. The water must be readily available to wash both eyes simultaneously. When there is more than one flushing stream of water, flushing streams must rise to approximately equal heights. The eyewash units must be designed to provide flushing water velocities which are not injurious to the eyes and must be designed to provide enough room to allow the eyelids to be held open with the hands while the eyes are in the water stream(s). The nozzles must be protected to

prevent freezing of flushing water in cold weather. Also, the nozzles must be protected with airtight covers, which can be easily removed, to prevent airborne contamination. The portable units must be constructed of material that will not corrode in the presence of the flushing fluid.

We appreciate your interest in employee safety and health. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Patricia K. Clark, Director  
Directorate of Compliance Programs