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LAB SAFETY

Posted by Anonymous on Fri, 2015-05-08 15:01

LAB SAFETY: if you have 4 laboratories upstairs and 4 downstairs, how many emergency showers are you required to install?

Voting:



No votes yet

Year Level:

7
8
9
10

Senior Secondary

Laboratory Technicians:

Laboratory Technicians

Showing 1-1 of 1 Responses

LAB SAFETY

Submitted by sat on 19 May 2015

Introduction:

Thank you for your question. The brief answer is that your requirements should be determined by a detailed risk assessment undertaken on your school site. The following

information includes some aspects that we think should be in this assessment. Given that you will have science laboratories on both floors, you will require separate safety shower facilities in both the upstairs and the downstairs areas.

Requirement for Safety Shower Facilities in School Science Teaching Areas:

The requirement for school science teaching areas to provide emergency eyewash and shower facilities is set out in a number of documents including the

- National Code of Practice for First Aid in the workplace
- AS/NZS 2243.10:2004 Safety in Laboratories Part 10 Storage of chemicals,
- AS/NZS 2982:2010 Laboratory Design and Construction
- AS 4775—2007 Emergency eyewash and shower equipment.

Details of these requirements are given in the response to an earlier ASSIST question on emergency shower facilities, and are not fully repeated here. For details please refer to [Safety Shower Requirements](#)

Some factors to consider in your Risk Assessment:

- As you will have laboratories on both floors, you will require separate safety shower facilities on each floor (AS 4775-2007, 6.6).
- Emergency shower facilities should be situated within a 10 second travel time from the hazard (AS 4775-2007, 6.6).
- Consider which of the rooms in your science teaching area will require the provision of a safety shower. In your question you describe a setting with 4 laboratories each on two floors. As a safety shower is required only in areas that use hazardous substances, you may be able to eliminate some of these, for example a dedicated Physics teaching area where hazardous chemicals are not used. However, if your school is planning a new building or the refurbishment of an existing building, then it may be wise to plan for all rooms to be used as general science laboratories, and to provide access to safety showers for all of them.
- Your question does not mention either a chemical store room or a science preparation area. Both of these will also need the provision of access to a safety shower, and we recommend that these are included in your local risk assessment.
- Having identified the rooms or areas on each level that require the provision of a safety shower, you could then consider to what extent one shower could effectively serve a number of these areas. We also recommend that in assessing possible travel distances and times to an emergency shower, you do so at times when the facilities are busy with normal human traffic, and not when the areas are relatively unoccupied.

Some science teaching areas have an “open plan” design so that one safety shower could possibly service several rooms or areas. In others, due to spatial distance (for example rooms arranged along a corridor), a separate emergency shower would be required for each room or area.

Therefore it would be a matter for your local risk assessment to determine how many and what type of facilities are required on each level, with consideration given to the guidelines above.

References

ASTA, Science ASSIST. 2014. *Safety Shower Requirements* Science ASSIST website, [/question/643/safety-shower-requirements](http://question/643/safety-shower-requirements)

Standards Australia. 2004. AS/NZS 2243 *Safety in Laboratories, Part 10: 2004 Storage of chemicals*. Sydney, Australia.

Standards Australia. 2007. AS 4775-2007 *Emergency eyewash and shower equipment*. Sydney, Australia.

Standards Australia. 2010. AS/NZS 2982.2010 *Laboratory design and construction*. Sydney, Australia.

Safe Work Australia 'First aid in the workplace – Code of Practice', July 2014, Safe Work Australia website.

<http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/swa/about/publications/pages/first-aid-in-the-workplace>

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