



Case Study

University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

Biology Research Facility Installs Latest Drench Shower/Eyewash Units

Challenge

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) is a public research university, and with more than 29,000 students, is the second largest in the state. Lapham Hall, named for Wisconsin's first eminent scientist, was built in 1961 to house the Botany, Chemistry and Zoology departments.

Today, Lapham Hall is a research facility for the university's Department of Biosciences with laboratories, classrooms, lecture halls and faculty offices. Since construction, the building went virtually unremodeled and needed updates. Safety was a concern with only about 10 drench showers and eyewash units serving the north wing of Lapham, many of which were no longer working properly.

"Our emergency equipment was vintage 1960s," said Jon Krezoski, director of safety and assurances for UWM. "The old fixtures in Lapham were corroded and routine testing was impossible. There were no floor drains near the showers, so we had to catch the water in a bucket to avoid flooding classrooms."

Solution

Craig Dretzka, a Bradley representative with Stickler & Associates, Milwaukee, and Greg Sniatynski, a project manager for Lee Plumbing Mechanical Contractors, Inc., Kenosha, Wis., worked with project engineers to identify safety solutions that would be cost effective, easy to install and more efficient for conducting ANSI-required testing.

Recessed wall-mounted combination drench shower and eyewash units were chosen for the renovation in 2006. In all, 27 fixtures were installed in the north tower, doubling the number of safety fixtures. "There were no problems installing the Bradley emergency equipment and the units fit into the wall cavity very nicely," Sniatynski said. "We specify Bradley products about 90 percent of the time because they're good and know we'll avoid some headaches."

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– Greg Sniatynski
Project Manager
Lee Plumbing Mechanical Contractors

Ready in an Emergency

The Barrier-Free Recessed Mounted Drench Shower and Eyewash units (Model S19-315BF) installed at UWM are flush mounted to the wall, making them fully accessible to individuals with physical disabilities and ideal for areas where space is a concern.

The S19-315BF unit complies with American National Standard Z358.1-2004 and is completely flush with the wall – even the pull-down shower handle does not protrude. No tight pinching or grasping is required to operate it. The concealed eyewash activates immediately when the front cabinet door is pulled down. Water collects in the door assembly and is directed back into the wall.

The Barrier-Free Recessed Mounted Drench Shower and Eyewash unit is designed in a sturdy one-piece cabinet for quick and easy installation, and maintenance is made easy with a wide-access panel. The brass stop-valve, tailpiece and fittings for the eyewash are hidden behind a locked, hinged door for convenient, yet restricted access.

"Everyone was afraid to open the valves on the old units, which was a huge problem," said Rick Koehler in physical plant services at UWM. "We're pleased with how the Bradley emergency fixtures capture all of the flushing fluid." Another benefit is the concealed eyewash – the design prevents the eyewash nozzles from becoming contaminated with dust and debris.

As with many facilities, finding the time and resources to test all of the emergency drench equipment on campus each week continues to be a challenge for UWM. But, the updated emergency equipment makes the job easier and helps create a safer learning environment.



Jon Krezoski inspects one of the science lab's recess-mounted emergency fixtures. Jon and his facility team at Lapham Hall appreciate that the new drench shower/eyewash units are easier to test and maintain. The old units were "vintage 1960s" with no floor drains for the shower.