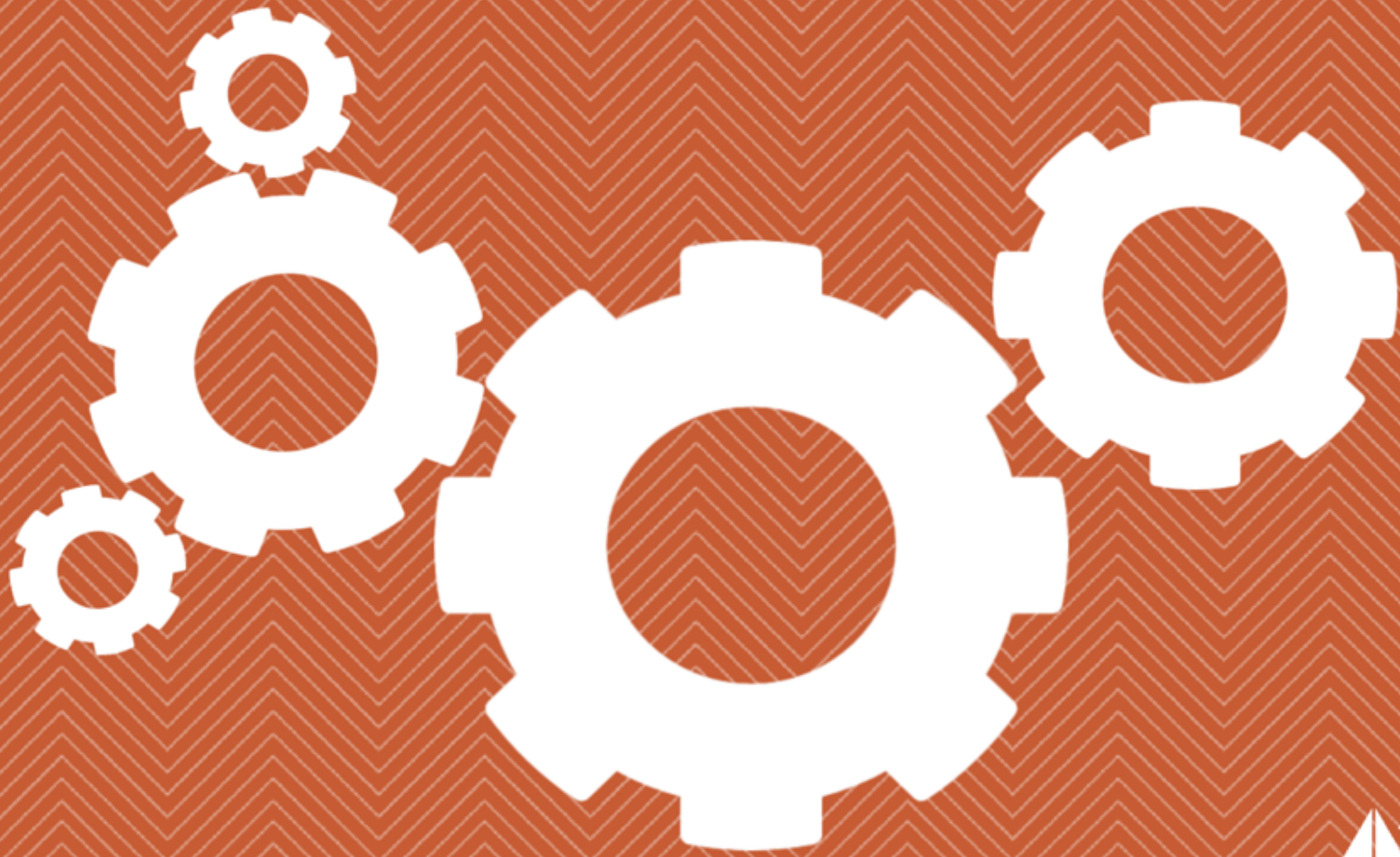
5 Pieces of Equipment You Didn't Know Require Routine Inspection

How To Do It And Why



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Introduction

You know that a variety of equipment throughout your facility requires routine inspection and upkeep. It's difficult to invest the resources necessary to proactively inspect and maintain equipment. For this reason, many opt for the "squeaky wheel gets the grease" plan (sometimes quite literally).

Facilities and Maintenance Managers who **can look beyond reactive maintenance** and develop a proactive inspection and maintenance program will ultimately **prevent emergencies** and **mitigate risks** due to equipment malfunction. They will ensure their facilities are **safe and compliant**. The following are five pieces of equipment that you should proactively inspect to remain in compliance and out of danger.

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You Are Required To Inspect:

- Catch Basins
- Oil/Water Separators
- Neutralization (Chip) Tanks
- Eyewash and Safety Showers
- Fire Extinguishers

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Catch Basins

The catch basins throughout a facility's grounds must be routinely inspected to ensure that the structures and equipment are operating correctly to **prevent stormwater pollution**. Catch basins that are clogged or backed up with debris and sediment will prevent the normal flow of stormwater which can **lead to flooding and other hazards**.

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Catch Basins

Inspection Frequency
Dictate this by sediment accumulation. If a particular catch basin has a tendency to accumulate more sediment, then be sure to inspect it more frequently. Inspect catch basins with **high sediment volume at least once a quarter**.

Cleaning & Maintenance
Catch basins should be completed as determined by the inspections. Make sure to keep **a detailed inspection and maintenance log of all of the catch basins** throughout the property.

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Oil/Water Separators

Just as use differs based on an organization's nature and location, **regulatory oversight of oil/water separators can vary from facility to facility**. Some separators, for example, are exempt from all Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) plan requirements. **Understanding the use and nature of your oil/water separators can help determine inspection requirements.**

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Oil/Water Separators

Inspections

Oil/water separator inspections should occur every quarter. If the inspection prescribes cleaning - be sure to properly clean and recharge the oil/water separator. Failing to inspect and maintain can result in **noncompliant discharge and regulatory consequences.**

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Neutralization (Chip) Tanks

Due to age and use, the limestone chips in neutralization **tanks lose their ability to adequately neutralize water in the system**. Routine inspection of neutralization tanks will identify if the chips are still functioning properly, or if they need to be replaced.

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Neutralization (Chip) Tanks

Inspection

You should inspect on an **annual basis, at the very minimum**. If the inspection reveals that the chips are spent, remove the chips, wash and **decontaminate the interior of the tank**, and then replace with new chips to recharge the system. Be sure to inspect the flow and discharge pipes as well.

As always**, ensure that you are properly documenting all inspection and maintenance.**

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Eyewash and Safety Showers

In order to ensure that eyewash and safety showers are functioning properly when needed, **inspections must be completed regularly.** Should you ever need to use the eyewash or safety shower, you'll want to make certain that they are easily accessible and working.

It is recommended (per **ANSI Z 358.1 standard**) that "plumbed eyewash and safety showers should be **activated on a weekly basis** long enough to be sure flushing fluid is provided."

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Eyewash and Safety Showers

Inspection

Each week, eyewash and safety showers should be **flushed, and it should be made clear that they are to remain free of obstruction.** Safety showers must have an **unobstructed area that is 16 inches from the center of the shower head.** Place tape on the floor to show the area and ensure that it remains free of obstructions.

Document all inspections and perform maintenance when necessary.

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Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers are integral to ensuring the safety of your facilities. Whether in a lab, in a manufacturing area, or in a kitchen, fire extinguishers must **be functioning, easily accessible, and properly mounted. OSHA requires** that employees have to travel **no more than 50 feet to the nearest fire extinguisher in most labs, garages, workshops, and manufacturing areas**; and **30 feet in most kitchen areas**. This is dependent on the class type of extinguisher required, and more information can be found here.

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Fire Extinguishers

Installation
In addition, OSHA also requires that **fire extinguishers are installed at a certain height to ensure they are free of obstruction**, and easily accessible when needed. Most **extinguishers should be mounted with the carrying handle 3.5 to 5 feet from the floor**; while large extinguishers should be mounted lower, with the **handle roughly 3 feet from the floor**.

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Fire Extinguishers

Inspection

OSHA requires visual inspections of **portable extinguishers and hoses each month**, and at least **one maintenance check per year**. Consider using an electronic Inspection tool to help document and track inspections. If you choose not to use an electronic inspection system, **make sure you keep accurate records**. Failure to inspect and maintain fire extinguishers can result in **regulatory noncompliance, and increase the risk of the facility immensely.**

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Conclusion

Routine inspection of the aforementioned equipment will help you achieve regulatory compliance, while ensuring that your facility is a safe place to inhabit. In addition to assuring compliance and safety, proactive inspection and maintenance is more cost-efficient than run-to-fail or reactive maintenance practices. Avoid costly malfunction and regulatory penalties, and consider a proactive inspection and maintenance program.

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For More Information

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