

Actsafes Safety Bulletin #33

SPECIAL SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN EMPLOYING INFANT ACTORS (15 DAYS TO SIX MONTHS OLD)

This bulletin addresses special safety considerations regarding the employment of infant actors in motion picture and television production.

1. Hands should be washed before and after handling infants and after changing diapers.
2. Applicable laws and regulations pertaining to tobacco smoke must be followed.

When using special effects smokes the producer should take steps to prevent exposure of the infant to the smoke. You should also consult Safety Bulletin #10 – GUIDELINES REGARDING THE USE OF ARTIFICIALLY CREATED SMOKES, FOGS AND LIGHTING EFFECTS.

3. With regard to an infant whose employment is governed by California Laws, the responsibility for caring and attending to the infant's health and safety is as follows:

- a. Studio Teacher:

In the discharge of these responsibilities, the studio teacher shall take cognizance of such factors as working conditions, physical surroundings, signs of the minor's mental and physical fatigue, and the demands placed upon the minor.... The studio teacher may refuse to allow the engagement of a minor on a set or location and may remove the minor therefrom, if in the judgement of the studio teacher, conditions are such as to present a danger to the health, safety or morals of the minor.

(8 CCR ' 11755.2)

- b. Nurse:

"Direct and indirect patient care services that insure the safety, comfort, personal hygiene, and protection of patients; and the performance of disease prevention".
(2 BPC ' 2725 (a))

For infants subject to laws other than California's, an appropriate person should be designated responsible for that infant's health and safety. That person should decide whether or not a hazard exists and take appropriate action to address the concerns as indicated above.

4. In British Columbia, several rules apply to the employment of children in film and television:
 - a. School comes first: if children will be missing school, steps must be taken to ensure that they do not fall behind. If three consecutive school days are missed, a the employer must provide a qualified tutor on set for at least three hour per day
 - b. You need an annual employment permit from the Director of Employment Standards to employ anyone under 15 years of age
 - c. All time on the set other than meal periods count as work time. Children are entitled to at least 4 hours pay for each day worked
 - d. All earnings of children must be reported to the Employment Standards Branch.

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5. If unsafe conditions are suspected by the Studio Teacher or nurse, a studio safety professional or representative, should be called for consultation, as required by the production's Injury and Illness Prevention Program.
6. Trailer holding tanks should not be pumped while the infant is present or immediately prior to the infant's arrival. The trailer should be well ventilated prior to the arrival of the infant.
7. When substances are used for altering an infant's appearance, provisions should be made for bathing the infant.
8. Foods which commonly cause allergic reactions should not be used to alter the appearance of the infant's skin, unless their use is specifically approved by a medical doctor. These foods include, but are not limited to: raspberry and strawberry jams, jellies and preserves.

Consumer products including glycerin, lubricating jellies, and cosmetics, should not be used to alter an infant's appearance. Permission should be obtained from the parent or guardian prior to applying any substance to the infant's skin.

9. Once wardrobe and props have been issued by the production for use on/with an infant, the wardrobe and props should not be reissued for another infant without laundering wardrobe and disinfecting props.
10. Infant accessories provided by the production, such as bassinets, cribs and changing tables, should be sanitized at the time of delivery to the set, and on a regular basis. Infant accessories should not be exchanged from one infant to another without first having been sanitized, (bottles, nipples and pacifiers should not be exchanged between infants).

Note: All production personnel working with infants are urged to review the "Blue Book," entitled "The Employment of Minors in the Entertainment Industry," published by the Studio Teachers, Local 884, IATSE. Reference should also be made to federal and provincial labor laws and to any applicable collective bargaining agreements that govern the employment of child actors.

