

# Actsafes Safety Bulletin #6

## ANIMAL HANDLING RULES



1. The safety of working animals and the persons working on such productions shall be of primary concern.
2. Only qualified professional trainers and/or wranglers should be allowed to work with animals on productions.
3. Notice shall be given prior to shooting, on the call sheet, that animals are working. A "closed set" notice should be posted on all stages where animals are working and every effort should be made to maintain a closed set where animals are working on location.
4. The trainer or person supplying the animal shall be responsible for obtaining all necessary inoculations, permits, applicable licenses and medical safeguards.
5. An easily accessible area shall be available for loading and unloading animals.
6. It is the responsibility of the trainer to convey to the cast and crew specific safety concerns relative to the animals being used. The trainer shall address the cast and crew (including the parent and/or guardian of any children on the set) regarding safety precautions while animals are on the set (e.g., maintain a safe distance from wild and exotic animals, no personal pets, no feeding, no running, escape routes, etc.)
7. The procedures for dealing with live ammunition issued by the Actsafes Safety Bulletins (*Safety Bulletin #2- Safety With Firearms: Special Use of Live Ammunition*) shall be observed. The level of ammunition loads and explosives should be determined in consultation with the trainer and/or wrangler and the firearms expert.
8. The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies' (CFHS) position statement on the use of animals in entertainment opposes the administration of any drug for non-therapeutic purposes in order to alter the performance or behaviour of the animals.  
  
As a safety backup, consideration should be given to the availability of tranquilizing equipment. Potentially dangerous or complicated animal action should warrant the presence of a qualified veterinarian.
9. Equipment operated in conjunction with working animals should be in a safe operating condition as determined by the trainer and/or wrangler in conjunction with the property master. Basic animal safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, fire hoses and nets should be readily available.
10. Under no circumstances should horse falls be accomplished by tripping or pitfalls.
11. All hitch rails shall be fastened in the ground in such a manner that the tugging of a frightened horse cannot pull them loose (e.g., sleeve installation). On a stage, hitch rails will be bolted or fastened in a rigid manner. Scenery and props should be secured. Objects (e.g., ladders, pedestals, etc.) that easily tip over can startle the animals.
12. Horses being used on a production shall be properly shod for the working surface (e.g., borium, rubber shoes, etc.).

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13. Extreme caution should be taken when using exotic venomous reptiles. The proper antidote (anti-venom) should be selected depending upon the type of reptile. Location of the antidote shall be predetermined and printed on the call sheet.
14. The smell of alcohol has a disquieting effect on animals. All precautions shall be taken in that regard when animals are working.
15. The producer shall notify the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) prior to the commencement of any work involving an animal or animals; script scenes shall be made available; representatives of the SPCA may be present at any time during the filming.
16. There should be two handlers for each large undomesticated animal such as a large cat or carnivore (mountain lion or larger).
17. Depending on the types of animals being used, and the filming location, consideration should be given to providing onsite emergency medical transportation, with qualified medical personnel, up to and including advanced life support, as necessary.

