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Motion Picture Safety Primer

General Health and Safety



second edition

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Note: The material in this publication is intended as educational information only. This publication does not replace the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation administered by WorkSafeBC. Employers and workers should always refer to the Regulation for specific requirements that apply to their activities.

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Introduction

Almost everyone involved in film and television production will encounter potential hazards on the job. You can avoid accidents and injuries by following safe work practices and working safely according to your training.

This primer describes basic workplace health and safety information for employers (production companies) and workers (cast and crew).

Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and Workers Compensation Act

This primer includes references to the Regulation and the Act, which describe legal requirements for health and safety in British Columbia. Visit WorkSafeBC.com for an online, searchable version of the Regulation and excerpts from the Workers Compensation Act.

Common terms

Incident

An accident or other occurrence that resulted in or had the potential for causing an injury or occupational disease. Incidents include:

- Near misses.
- Accidents in which no one is hurt but equipment or property is damaged.
- Accidents in which a worker is injured or killed.

Near Miss

An incident in which there is no injury or damage but that could have resulted in an injury, death, or damage to equipment or property.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE includes protective clothing or equipment such as gloves, high-visibility vests, goggles, or respirators.

Qualified Worker

Someone who is knowledgeable of the work, the hazards involved and the means to control the hazards, by reason of education, training, experience, or a combination thereof.

Risk assessments

Risk assessments are required for each potentially hazardous activity or situation in your production. For example, conduct risk assessments for:

- Stunts
- Special effects
- Water work
- Helicopters, fixed-wing aircraft, and gliders
- Exotic or domestic animals and reptiles
- Potentially hazardous locations

It is important to conduct a risk assessment in all stages of the production process.

How to conduct a risk assessment

1. Identify potential hazards associated with the activities at each location. Involve cast and crew members in this process.
2. Determine the risk level for each hazard or unsafe work practice.
3. Prioritize the hazards so you can deal with higher-risk hazards first.
4. Review the risk assessment on a regular basis (for example, if the activity or equipment changes).

Types of hazards

Look for potential hazards in these categories:

- Workplace acts (for example, working without a hard hat).
- Workplace environment (for example, cables and other obstructions on the floor).

Types of hazards (cont.)

- Harmful substances (for example, hazardous materials such as paint thinner or asbestos).

Write your risk assessments down

It is important to document risk assessments. That way you can attach them to call sheets, and have the assessments available in case Work-SafeBC asks to see them. Various risk assessment forms are available on the Actsafe website forms page.

Once you have assessed risks and prioritized the hazards, you can move on to risk control.

Risk control

Whenever possible, eliminate potential hazards by substituting different work processes or substances. For example:

- Select a safer location.
- Change camera placement.
- Use less-harmful chemicals in the paint department if alternatives are available.

If you can't eliminate potential hazards, find ways to minimize them. For example:

- Build enclosures or guards around power saws.
- Guard floor openings and install hand rails on stairways.
- Use appropriate PPE such as gloves and safety eyewear.
- Ventilate work areas when chemicals are used, and wear respirators, if necessary.
- Ensure that material safety data sheets (MSDSs) are available to the crew for all the hazardous materials they use.

Reporting injuries

Cast or crew members who are injured while working in BC are covered by WorkSafeBC.

Cast or crew members

- Report any injury to a first aid attendant or supervisor.
- To file a claim, complete Form 6A. This form can be found at WorkSafeBC.com under "Forms".
- Inform any doctors you see that they are treating you for a work-related injury.

Employers

- Follow studio procedures for reporting.
- Secure the scene.
- Report serious incidents immediately to WorkSafeBC by calling 1.888.621.7233.
- For after-hours emergencies, call 1.866.922.4357 (WCB-HELP).
- To file a claim, complete Form 7. This form can be found at WorkSafeBC.com under "Forms".
- Complete a 52E40 Incident report form. This should accompany Form 7, or if not reportable kept on file with copy to Joint Health and Safety Committee to follow-up on recommendations. This form can be found at WorkSafeBC.com under "Forms".

For more information:

- Contact WorkSafeBC or Actsafe

Health and safety responsibilities

Employers can include: Producers, Production Managers, production companies and/or sub-contractors.

Employer responsibilities

Employers must remedy any workplace conditions that are hazardous to the health or safety of the employer's workers, and ensure that workers are made aware of any potential health or safety hazards to which they are likely to be exposed to.

- Provide a safe and healthy workplace.
- Provide orientation, information, instruction, training, supervision and protective equipment required to ensure a healthy and safe workplace.
- Establish occupational health and safety policies and programs.
- Provide safe equipment and machinery.
- Provide access to the Workers Compensation Act.
- Consult and cooperate with health and safety committees or representatives and WorkSafeBC.
- Report all serious accidents, injuries and incidents to WorkSafeBC.

Supervisors can include: Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers, Crew Chiefs, Stunt Coordinators, Department Heads and anyone who has the authority to direct workers.

The supervisor plays a key role in workplace health and safety. It is the supervisor who can help ensure the employer's policies and procedures are implemented in the day to day work. And it is the supervisor who will be among the first to hear of concerns about safety on set.

Supervisor responsibilities

- Ensure the health and safety of all workers under your direct supervision and inform them about potential hazards.
- Ensure that workers are appropriately trained and orientated.
- Document health & safety matters.

Workers

The basic purpose of the employer's health and safety program is to protect workers. But, workers also have responsibilities to ensure safety is in place, both for themselves and others who may be affected by their actions. Productions involve different crafts and areas of expertise. Teamwork and respect for fellow workers are keys to getting the job done safely.

Worker responsibilities

- Work in accordance with established safe work procedures, including the use of PPE.
- To not work while impaired by alcohol, drugs or other causes (ie. fatigue).
- To not engage in horseplay.
- Report all violations of the Act, including issues with PPE or the existence of any hazards.
- Cooperate with the health and safety committees or representatives and with WorkSafeBC.

Joint health and safety committee

- Identify potential hazards or unsafe work practices, and recommend ways to improve conditions.
- Consider and respond to health and safety recommendations from the cast and crew.
- Make sure regular workplace inspections are carried out.
- Make sure incidents are investigated.

For more information:

- In this book, see page 15: *Joint health & safety committees*.
- Workers Compensation Act, Part 3, Division 3, Sections 115–124: General Duties of Employers, Workers and Others

Refusing unsafe work

All BC workers have the right to refuse work they believe may be hazardous to their own health and safety or to that of other workers. You can be held liable if you direct others to carry out work if there is a reasonable cause to believe it is unsafe. You cannot be fired or disciplined for refusing unsafe work.

How to refuse unsafe work

1. Report concerns to your supervisor or a member of the joint health and safety committee. They must immediately investigate and fix the problem or let you know if they don't think there is a problem.
2. If you still believe there is a problem, continue to refuse the work. Your supervisor is required to continue investigating the situation with you and another worker (from the joint committee, the union, or a person of your choice).
3. If there is still no resolution, continue to refuse the work. Both you and the employer must contact WorkSafeBC for further investigation.

For more information:

- OHS Regulation 3.12-3.13: Refusal of Unsafe Work
- *Actsafes Your Right To Refuse* poster

Call sheets

Use daily call sheets to alert the cast and crew to potential hazards for that day's shooting schedule and to tell workers about safety precautions they need to take. Include safety bulletins (available from Actsafe), memos, and other pertinent information.

What to include on call sheets

- Potential hazards specific to the location.
- Scheduled stunts (for example, vehicle action sequences or use of aircraft).
- Special effects that will be used (for example, fire, explosions, smoke, or fog).
- Scheduled use of firearms.
- Required PPE and how workers can get it (for example, if there will be smoke or fog on an interior set, remind workers that they must wear respirators).
- The name, contact number, and location of the first aid attendant.
- The location of the first aid kit or facility.
- The location of the nearest hospital or emergency facility.
- Any other health and safety concerns the cast and crew need to be aware of.

Safety talks

Informal safety talks let the cast and crew know about potential hazards and safety precautions during production.

When to hold safety talks

- At the start of each day's filming.
- When filming at a new location.
- When filming at potentially hazardous locations such as caves, pits, or cliffs.
- Immediately before performing a stunt or special effect, or using aircraft.
- When special rigging or other equipment is being used.

Who leads safety talks

- First assistant directors.
- Department heads.
- Stunt or special effects coordinators.
- Pilots or operators of aircraft, marine craft, or other unusual equipment is involved.

What to include in safety talks

- Discuss potential hazards or safety concerns.
- Explain the safety precautions in place and required safety procedures.
- Explain how to get first aid or emergency medical treatment.
- Describe emergency exit routes and evacuation procedures.
- Distribute PPE and explain how to use it.
- Encourage the cast and crew to voice their concerns and safety recommendations.
- Brief late calls and extras when they arrive on the set.

Occupational health & safety programs

Productions that employ 20 or more workers must develop and implement an occupational health and safety program, and train cast and crew in relevant sections of the program.

Productions that employ fewer than 20 workers are still required to initiate and maintain an informal program based on regular (at least monthly) health and safety meetings with workers.

An OHS program should include:

- A written health and safety policy that:
 - States your commitment to making health and safety a priority.
 - States the program's objectives.
 - Defines roles and responsibilities of the production company, cast, and crew.
- Written safe work procedures and emergency response procedures.
- Education and training for cast and crew.
- Regular workplace inspections (the definition of regular depends on the conditions at each production site).
- Regular (at least monthly) health and safety meetings.
- Incident investigations.
- Records and statistics (for example, inspection reports and incident investigations).
- A joint health and safety committee.

You cannot simply copy another production's program. You must develop and implement a program unique to your own production.

For more information:

- Contact Actsafe for a sample health and safety program or for assistance in developing a program.
- OHS Regulation: Sections 3.1-3.4
- *How to Implement an Effective Occupational Health and Safety Program* (WorkSafeBC publication)
- *Effective Safety and Health Programs: The Key to a Safe Workplace and a Defence of Due Diligence* (WorkSafeBC publication)

Joint health and safety committees

Productions that employ 20 or more workers in a medium hazard rated setting must establish and maintain a joint health and safety committee.

Productions that employ fewer than 20 workers are usually required to have a worker health and safety representative rather than a committee.

Responsibilities

- Follow the established Health and Safety Program.
- Identify situations that might be unhealthy or unsafe for workers.
- Recommend methods to control hazards.
- Recommend methods to improve the health & safety program and the work environment.
- Consider and respond to health and safety complaints or recommendations.
- Promote safe work practices.
- Make sure regular workplace inspections occur.
- Make sure incidents are investigated.
- Participate in workplace inspections and incident investigations.
- Make sure the production meets WorkSafeBC requirements.

Members

Your joint health and safety committee must include at least four members—usually two crew representatives and two production company representatives. The committee must be comprised of at least 50% worker representatives.

Meetings

- Meet at least once a month.
- Record minutes for each meeting.
- Give copies of minutes to the production company.

For more information:

- Workers Compensation Act, Sections 125-140: Joint Health & Safety Committees
- *Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee Workbook* (WorkSafeBC publication)

Safety bulletins and fact sheets

Actsafes provides Safety Bulletins and Fact Sheets for Motion Picture productions in BC. These guidelines, which are developed with reference to applicable Provincial regulations and legislation, cover industry standard practices for a wide variety of common safety issues.

Actsafes is always updating and/or adding new Safety Bulletins and Fact Sheets. Be sure to check www.actsafe.ca and click "Safety Bulletins" for the most up-to-date listing.

Actsafes Safety Bulletins

- #1 - Safety With Firearms
- #2 - Special Use of Live Ammunition
- #3 - Helicopters
- #4 - Stunts
- #5 - Safety Awareness
- #6 - Animal Handling Rules
- #7 - SCUBA Equipment Recommendations
- #8 - Traditional Camera Cars
- #9 - Multiple Dressing Room Units
- #10 - Artificially Created Smokes, Fogs and Lighting Effects
- #11 - Fixed-Wing Aircraft
- #12 - Exotic Venomous Reptiles
- #13 - Gasoline Operated Equipment
- #14 - Parachuting and Skydiving
- #15 - Boating Safety
- #16 - Pyrotechnic Special Effects
- #17 - Water Hazards
- #18 - Air Bags
- #19 - Open Flames
- #20 - Motorcycles
- #21 - Appropriate Clothing and PPE

Actsafes Safety Bulletins (cont.)

- #22 - Elevating Work Platforms (Scissor Lifts) and Aerial Extensible Boom Platforms
- #23 - Lighting Systems & Electrical Equipment
- #24 - Blood Borne Pathogens and Other Potentially Infectious Materials
- #25 - Camera Cranes
- #26 - Preparing Urban Exterior Locations
- #27 - Poisonous Plants
- #28 - Railways and Railway Equipment
- #29 - Hot Air Balloons
- #30 - Edged and Piercing Props
- #31 - Indigenous Pests
- #32 - Food Handling
- #33 - Infant and Child Actors
- #34 - Working in Extreme Cold Temperatures
- #35 - Working in Extreme Hot Temperatures
- #36 - Miniature Remote Controlled Camera Helicopters
- #37 - Vehicle Restraint Systems
- #38 - Inclement or Severe Weather
- #39 - Foam(ed) Plastics in Set/Prop Construction
- #40 - Non-Camera Utility Vehicles

Actsafes Fact Sheets

- #1 - Welding, Cutting and Allied Processes
- #2 - First Aid
- #3 - Fire Prevention
- #4 - Construction/Woodworking
- #5 - Construction/Demolition
- #6 - Hair and Makeup
- #7 - New Locations and Temporary Location Facilities
- #8 - WHMIS
- #9 - Transportation
- #10 - First Aid and Emergency Transportation
- #11 - Propane Guidelines
- #12 - Fishbones - Electrical Ladders or Cable Hangers

Working alone

Working alone or in isolation is fairly common in the motion picture and performing arts industries. Working alone can have serious consequences if a worker sustains an injury or becomes ill and no one is available to help them.

Any job where a worker is alone should be examined for risk factors to determine the degree of exposure involved. A complete assessment of potential problems leads to solutions designed to eliminate or reduce the risk. Examples of potential hazards could include: working in a high-crime area, working at heights (for example, on ladders or scaffolds), working with electricity or equipment and working in extreme or remote conditions (for example; cold weather, resource road with only one access in and out).

Working alone may also mean two or three people working deep in a forest or far from the city. An accident or quickly shifting weather conditions could harm or trap all of them. Lack of policy, procedure and a daily plan for such occasions could result in unnecessary injury or death.

Sections 4.20.2 to 4.21 and 4.23 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation describe employer and supervisor responsibilities for workers who are working alone or in isolation. Sections 4.28 to 4.31 cover workplace violence — these may also be applicable, depending on the situation.

The following must be done before a worker is assigned to work alone or in isolation:

1. **Identify** hazards and assess the risks associated with them.
2. **Control** risks by eliminating hazards entirely or, if that is not possible, minimizing the risks.
3. **Educate** workers about hazards and how to control the risks associated with them.
4. **Develop** and implement a written person-check procedure for checking on lone workers.
5. **Review** procedures.

As an employer or employer representative (producers, production companies and subcontractors), the Regulation requires you to provide a safe and healthy environment and:

- Identify hazards.
- Find ways to eliminate or minimize risks.
- Ensure that supervisors and workers are trained to recognize hazards and work safely.
- Develop a written health and safety program specific to your workplace or location.
- Respond promptly when a worker or supervisor informs you of a potential hazard.
- If an accident or injury occurs, make sure it is investigated to prevent similar incidents from occurring.

As a supervisor (directors, assistant directors, technical directors, managers, crew chiefs, stunt coordinators, department heads, and anyone else who has the authority to direct workers) you are responsible for the health and safety of workers under your direction. The Regulation requires you to:

- Recognize hazards.
- Know how to control risks.
- Ensure workers are oriented to the written policy and have the required information.

Supervision is an ongoing task, which means supervisors need to check with workers periodically to ensure that they are working according to their training and following safe work procedures.

As an employee, you should:

- Follow health and safety requirements.
- Work according to your training.
- Participate in training, as necessary
- Use any required personal protective equipment.

If you don't know how to do something safely, ask your supervisor for instruction or training before carrying out the task. If you see an unsafe condition, correct it immediately or report it to your supervisor. Workers should consider when they will be in positions that may require them to work alone or in isolation and bring those situations to the attention of their supervisor or employer.

For more information:

- *Actsafe Motion Picture Fact Sheet #14: Working Alone or in Isolation*
- *Working Alone: A Handbook for Small Business* (WorkSafeBC publication):
www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/bk131.pdf

Hearing testing

Section 7.8(1) of the Occupational Health & Safety Regulation states that employers must provide workers who are exposed to noise that exceeds noise exposure limits, hearing tests at least once every 12 months.

Actsafe provides free hearing testing of motion picture and performing arts workers in occupations deemed as 'at risk' of a hearing injury. Any other crew members tested are the responsibility of the production.

At risk occupations

- AD Department members who use headsets
- Metal Fabricators
- Camera Department
- Off-line Editors
- Construction Coordinator and Foreman
- Scenic Carpenter
- Electrician/Lamp Operator Set/Wireman
- First Aid
- Set Dressers
- Generator Operators
- Sound Mixers, Boom & Playback Operators
- Greens Department
- Sculptor
- Grip Department
- Stunt Performers
- Paint Department
- Transportation Department
- Greens Department

At risk occupations (cont.)

- Labourers Welders
- Lead Carpenter
- Special Effects Department

For more information on free hearing testing, contact Actsafe at 604.733.4682 or by email at info@actsafe.ca.

For more information:

- OHS Regulation 7.8(1): Hearing tests
- *Listen While You Work: Hearing Conservation in the Arts* (Actsafe publication)

Respirator fit testing

Respirators may be required when creating smoke or fog effects on interior sets or when working in locations with compromised air quality (ie. around painting, welding, sculpting or some construction). Producer(s) are responsible for the purchase of appropriate respirators (consult MSDS as required).

Respiratory protection must be properly fit-tested and used according to manufacturers instructions.

Actsafes provides free respirator fit testing of motion picture and performing arts workers in situations where air quality may be compromised.

For more information on free respirator fit testing, contact Actsafes at 604.733.4682 or email at info@actsafe.ca.

For more information:

- OHS Regulation 8.32-8.45: Respiratory Protection
- *Actsafes Safety Bulletin #10: Artificially Created Smokes, Fogs and Lighting Effects*
- *Actsafes Safety Bulletin #10a: Air Quality*

Smoking regulations

Tobacco-related illness is the leading cause of preventable death in BC. Tobacco use causes up to 6,000 deaths in BC each year. The facts show smoking kills more people in BC than all other drugs, motor vehicle collisions, murder, suicide and HIV/AIDS combined.

Tobacco regulations ban:

- Smoking in all indoor public spaces and work places, this includes film sets and on stage in a theatre.
- Smoking within three metres of public and work place doorways, open windows or air intakes.

For more information:

- Tobacco Control Program, Ministry of Health
(www.health.gov.bc.ca/tobacco/)

Young and new workers

All employers must ensure that a young or new worker is given health and safety orientation and training specific to his/her workplace before the young or new worker begins work.

A young worker is defined as “any worker who is under 25 years of age”, and a new worker is defined as “any worker who is new to the workplace, returning to a workplace where the hazards in that workplace have changed during the worker’s absence, affected by a change in the hazards of a workplace, or relocated to a new workplace if the hazards in that workplace are different from the hazards in the worker’s previous workplace.”

An employer must document all their orientation and training. Actsafe has a sample form available as part of the publication *Young and New Worker Orientation*.

Tips for Effective Orientation and Training

- Set the tone by providing a clean, safe work environment.
- Stress safety over productivity. Productivity will come as new employees learn.
- Encourage questions, questions, and more questions.
- Don’t assume anything is “common sense.”
- Evaluate and assess the safety of equipment young workers might be required to operate.
- Ensure that young and new workers are appropriately supervised.

Tips for Effective Orientation and Training (cont.)

- Involve supervisors and experienced workers in orientation and training.

For more information:

- OHS Regulation 3.22-3.25: Young and New Workers
- *Young and New Worker Orientation* (Actsafes publication)

Resources

Actsafe

Visit www.actsafe.ca for health and safety resources, including the following:

- *Actsafe Safety Bulletins and Fact Sheets*
- *Health & Safety Posters*
- *Risk Assessment Forms*
- *New and Young Worker Orientation* infosheet
- *New and Young Worker Orientation* series (three videos)
- *Hearing Testing Information*
- *Film Safety Primers for Production; Equipment, Vehicles and Locations; and Paint Safety*

WorkSafeBC

Visit www.worksafebc.com for resources, including:

- *Searchable OHS Regulation*
- *Workers Compensation Act*
- *Fill-able Report Forms*

What is Actsafe?

Actsafes partners with B.C.'s entertainment industries to keep workers safe. Actsafe is where people in the industry connect with others who share their safety concerns, and set the stage to work safely.

Mission

Collaborating with B.C.'s motion picture and performing arts industries to provide innovative, accessible health and safety training and resources.

Values

Accessibility, Collaboration, Innovation.

Structure

Actsafes is governed by the industries it represents. We operate through two standing committees that represent the motion picture and performing arts communities. Membership on these committees includes both employer and worker representatives.

Contact us:

Tel: 604.733.4682
Fax: 604.733.4692
Toll-free: 1.888.229.1455
Email: info@actsafe.ca

www.actsafe.ca

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General Health and Safety

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