**General Theatre Safety** Revised Sept 17, 2020

**Welland Centennial Tech Club**

**Fire**

With all the electricity that is used on stage, you should always be prepared for the possibility of a **fire,** especially in the performing area. Many theatres, including ours, have a **fire curtain** that can close off the performing area from the auditorium. Every theatre should have working regularly tested **fire extinguishers** available in key areas. Use multi-purpose fire extinguishers, like an **ABC rated extinguisher.** Always use fabrics that are **inherently flame retardant** or have been treated with a **flame retardant.** Acertificate of compliance is required. Never block **fire exits.** A blocked fire exit could lead to the theatre being shut down during an inspection for the local fire department.

**Dress**

**Loose fitting clothing, jewellery** and **long hair** can be a very serious problem in the theatre. If a shirt-tail is hanging out and you are working with a power tool, the blade or bit of the power tool could become tangled in loose fitting clothing, and you would be pulled into the moving blade or bit. The same thing could happen with jewellery or long hair. If you have long hair, be sure to pin or tie it up and out of the way. Never wear **sandals** or **open toed shoes** to work in the theatre. Always wear **work gloves** when there is the possibility of getting splinters, rope burn, or if you’re working with hot lights. A few of the typical times to wear work gloves would be during **load-ins, set strike, taking out trash, handling and focusing hot lights**  and working a **fly system.** Never use **personal music players** or play music at high volumes while you’re working in the theatre. If there is an emergency, like a lighting wrench dropped from above, you want to be able to hear him or her scream “HEADS UP” so you can get out of the way.

**Ladders**

Only have **one person** at a time on a ladder, and don’t stand above the **safe level.** Make sure the ladder is rated for the weight of the person climbing it. Never leave **tools** on top of a ladder, even for a few seconds. Always **face the ladder** when climbing up or down and always maintain **three point contact**.

**Storage**

Watch **storage safety.** Don’t stack things so they are unstable and might fall. Anything leaning against a wall that is higher than 5’ needs to be tied off. Lumber should be stored **horizontally** to keep it from warping and large pieces of scenery should be stored **vertically** and slightly tilted for easier access.

Any props or scenery stored in the wings must be neatly and compactly stowed as far off stage as possible.

Do not leave anything on or near any stairs. The theatre is dark at times and this becomes a serious tripping hazard.

**General**

Dispose of waste as it is generated. Do not leave it on the ceiling or floor.

Do not leave anything on the FOH catwalk floor. This is a safety hazard.

Remove all tape as soon as it is no longer needed. Tape left on becomes hard to remove.

I find that coloured artists tape (paper) works well for spike marks and removes easier than masking tape.

To take up taped down cables, hold the cable down with your foot and pull tape off. Keep moving your foot to keep the cable tight to the floor. This keeps the tape from wrapping around the cable. Gaffers tape rather than hardware store duct tape works cleaner.

**Stage Edge. Be aware of the stage edge at all times when working on the stage. Do not have a fall.**

**Loose cables, carpet etc** should be taped down so as not to be a tripping hazard.

**Follow directions** on everything you use and if you have not received instructions or been properly trained, then **don’t use it or touch it. If you are not sure ask for instruction.**

**Lighting**

Tighten all bolts and set screws on the lights, but do not over tighten.

The Fresnels using the pre-focus lamp must have the yoke bolts horizontal. This lamp (bulb) must not be tilted sideways.

The correct lamp for the fixtures must be used.

Do not handle lamps (bulbs) with bare fingers. The oil from the skin shortens lamp life by about 50%. If the lamp is contaminated, clean with alcohol before using.

Do not leave good lamps out of the carton.

Discard burnt out lamps immediately by putting in a carton and putting in the garbage. If not sure if lamp is faulty test with a continuity tester. Be aware that most lamps are pressurized and can burst violently.

**Report all injuries.**

**Horse play** can never be tolerated. The theatre is not a playground.

**Straw and Christmas Trees** DSBN regulations prohibit Straw and Live or Cut Christmas trees. Theatre Fire safety regulations only permit them if Flame Retardant treated.

**Candles and Open flames** DSBN regulations prohibit candles and open flames in the theatre and other areas. Good safety practice is to use an electric device.

**Pyrotechnics (Pyro) and Fireworks** are not permitted by DSBN regulations unless preapproved by the Fire Prevention Officer. Government regulations require the services of a Licensed Pyro Technician when Pyro is used and a Fire Department Approval. The hassle and the cost are not usually justified.

**Guns** A Possession and Acquisition License is required by someone in the company if a gun is to be used or is on the premises. There are definite rules that must be followed. This includes a gun that can fire live ammunition or only blanks (starter pistol) and also a replica gun. This includes a plastic gun that might at a glance appear to be real.

**Fog Machines** DSBN requires the preapproval of Fire Prevention Officer to use a fog machine. The use of a fog machine requires the services of a licensed Fire Alarm Technician to disable the smoke detectors in the area and reinstate them after the fog has cleared. While the smoke detectors are disabled there must be a competent person on fire watch in the area. This must all be prearranged as far in advance as possible. If arrangements are not satisfactorily made the fog effect cannot be used.

Do not try to use a fog machine anywhere in the school unless the above arrangements have been made. You are likely to activate the fire alarm.