

Safety Guidelines for Filming in the City of Calgary

The Fire Safety Officer (FSO)

FSO's perform an important role during the process and issuance of a filming permit when a film production company is shooting on location. The fire department must be able to recognize specific types of filming activities, particularly when a production company is preparing for action type sequences. Once the activity is outlined the FSO must determine whether the proposed filming activity is safe and can be approved.

Once this information has been obtained, the FSO will be able to provide input as to their respective needs and concerns. Examples of fire department interests may include, but are not limited to, the type and number of equipment brought to the location, proper exiting from a building that may be occupied by the public, fire department access, construction of sets, parking considerations, use of aircraft, use of flammable liquids and gases, pyrotechnic special effects, stunts, etc.

A risk assessment meeting during pre-production with necessary production personnel and a FSO and presentation of a Production Fire Safety Plan may be required.

Emergency Process

In case of an emergency call 911. Follow procedures as laid out in your site-specific Emergency Response Plan.

The Emergency Response Plan must be approved by Calgary Fire Department.

Fire Department Access

- Access roads shall be required for every building when any portion of an exterior wall of the first story is located more than 50 M from fire department vehicle access
- Access roads shall be 6 M in width with hard surface all weather driving capabilities
- Access roads shall have a vertical clearance of 13 feet 6 inches
- Turnarounds are required for dead ends over 50 M
- Production vehicles, trucks and trailers shall not block fire access roads, exits or fire protection equipment
- On filming locations that are fenced or gated, keys, or a key box located on the premises must be readily available in case of an emergency

Call Sheets

Ensure Call Sheets are sent daily to Jeff Groves Jeffrey.groves@calgary.ca and Greg Ferguson Gregory.ferguson@calgary.ca and film@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com

Inspection Process

During the Fire Department's review of the proposed activity by the film production company the following guidelines and sequence of events should occur:

- The fire department and film production representative should discuss the proposed activity; i.e., pre-production construction, Special Effects or other fire/life safety hazards, dates, times etc.
- A film production liaison should be identified to the fire department, i.e., Location Manager, or Unit Production Manager
- The Fire Department issues permits for Open Flame, Special Effects, Pyrotechnics and must approve refueling operations and hot work processes
- Determination is made if periodic site inspections will suffice or if assignment of a standby FSO is necessary
- If periodic site inspection is utilized, prior to the first day of filming, an examination of the location should be conducted to affirm the proposed activity. Agreements made between the fire department and production company will be passed on to any other FSO within the Calgary Fire Department and will be consistently enforced
- The production company should have met all film inspection requirements prior to the fire departments arrival on the first day of filming
- If a standby FSO is assigned, an on-site inspection will be conducted

An Inspection will be conducted on the first day of filming to ensure that all requirements previously discussed have been met. If a change is made to the film that may impact life and safety, the fire department shall be notified.

It is in the best interest of the production company to make a conscious effort to police its own activities and not compromise fire and life safety concerns.

If the production company cannot prove its ability to police its own activities and correct violations in a timely fashion, then mitigating steps of enforcement will be taken, such as: warnings; temporary halting of production; full time stand-by FSO's; and as a last resort permanent halting of film production.

Duties/Assigning an FSO

All filming activities will be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine the level of hazard and whether or not the production requires a stand-by FSO or a fire inspection. Still photography, documentaries and student filming are exempt unless they fall into one of the categories listed.

The decision as to whether the FSO is on call or on location will be made on a day-to-day basis depending call sheet information including:

- Productions using pyrotechnic special effects and other special effects such as flame bars, propane cannons and other large fire scenes where flammable liquids and gases are used.
- Productions involving stunts, this may include pyrotechnic special effects, use of helicopters, automobile crashes, chase scenes, body burns, and any type of jumps or leaps involving automobiles, motorcycles, and people.
- Productions using tents where the occupant load exceeds 500
- Interior productions where generators, lights, and other filming equipment create a fire hazard and where set decorations, props and equipment may obstruct exits, access ways, and other building fire protection systems.

- Interior and exterior productions that may cause the public to congregate and/or where the size of the crew may affect safe egress evacuation.
- Productions occurring in mountainous brush covered or forested areas where the potential for a wildfire exist. In addition, roads or trails traversing through such areas.

Applying for a permit.

When applying for a permit the following steps must be taken:

- Notify the Creative Industries office at film@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com at least five business days in advance of any filming activities
- Provide a letter of permission from the property owner stating they are aware and approve of the activity
- Provide a Fire Safety Plan to us
- Provide a site plan outlining the activity being proposed
- Provide a product list of any product being used
- Provide the lead special effects person's name and certificate
- Provide names of assistants and if they are in charge of using product and provide their certification

Firearms Safety for Filming in Calgary

If firearms are to be discharged or used in any way; or visible to the public; and/or audible by the public the Calgary Police Services Firearms Support Unit and Creative Industries office must be notified at least five business days in advance via email to: film@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com and firearmssupport@calgarypolice.ca .

Include in the notification the following: date, time and location the filming will take place, the firearms that will be used and brief scene description along with the name, date of birth, address, phone number and email address of the gun wrangler. A Calgary Police Service Firearm Discharge Permit application must be filled out and submitted prior to filming.

It is the responsibility of the workplace parties to ensure compliance with all pertinent federal, provincial and municipal by-laws when using, transporting and handling firearms/weapons/ammunition/powder. Please note that for the purpose of this guideline, the words "gun" and "weapon" may be considered interchangeable with "firearm".

1. Firearms are dangerous and should always be treated as loaded.
2. Live ammunition will never be used on any set at any time.
3. A firearm will not be pointed at anyone, including the user, under any circumstances, including those loaded with blank ammunition.
4. Never indulge in horseplay while in charge of, or responsible for, any weapon. No worker shall engage in any prank, contest, feat of strength, unnecessary running or rough and boisterous conduct.

5. A “No Smoking” rule should apply to any area where ammunition or powder is stored, and signs to this effect should be posted.
6. All firearms on a set should be in the care and charge of the designated handler (Weapons Handler) who should be:
 - in possession of the valid license (Possession and Acquisition License) and certification(s) required pursuant to the [Firearms Act](#) and as mandated by the Chief Firearms Officer.
 - familiar with any weapons/firearms being used, and their registration and safety requirements.
 - familiar with the loading and unloading procedures for such weapons;
 - checking firearms/weapons before and after each use.
 - cleaning the firearms/weapons daily.
 - keeping a daily inventory of firearms/weapons in their care; and
 - making sure that any legal requirements regarding the storage and use of firearms and/or ammunition are always complied with. The Firearms Act and its related regulations govern the possession, transport, use and storage of firearms in Canada.
7. Practical firearms or weapons should not be used where a replica would suffice.
8. Only a firearm that has been manufactured for theatrical use, and built accordingly by qualified personnel, should be used to fire a charge.
9. No firearm that is to be fired should be altered in any way, unless the alteration is in accordance with all applicable legislation and regulations and has been done by a qualified Gunsmith with the approval of the manufacturer.
10. No firearm should be altered except as described in No. 9.
11. Never fire a gun with dirt, sand or any blockage in the barrel. Never put a weapon down in such a way that dirt or sand might cause blockage. In the event of a misfire or jam, no one other than the Handler should attempt any remedy. If the Handler is unsure as to what is causing the problem, the firearm should be taken out of use until such time as the cause can be determined. The weapon should not be used again until the Handler informs the Director or Producer that it is safe to do so.

Handling of Firearms on set

12. Any firearm brought onto the set should be registered with, and placed in the care of, the Handler.
 - Any firearm not immediately required on set should be secured under lock and key by the Handler.
 - Firearms should be removed from Actors or Stunt People between takes wherever possible and kept in a safe place.
13. The Handler should be allowed time to fulfill the following:
 - To discuss with the Directors and Assistant Directors how any weapons might be used in a particular scene.
 - To point out any safety requirements needed; and

- To make sure that any Actor or Stunt Person using the weapons is fully aware of the safety rules for the handling and firing of such weapons. An employer shall provide information, instruction and supervision to a worker to protect the health or safety of the worker.

Note: No crew or other “off camera” personnel should be in the vicinity of a firearm being fired without the minimum protection of safety goggles and ear plugs. A shatterproof clear plastic shield should be placed between any camera crew and a fired weapon which is directed toward or in the direction of the camera. An employer shall take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.

14. It should be the sole responsibility of the Handler to load and unload firearms/weapons. If this is unreasonable, then the Handler may designate assistants to assist, under their supervision, the handling, loading, and unloading of firearms/weapons.

Note: These assistants should only be chosen by the Handler, who have adequate time to familiarize themselves with the procedures and safe handling of the firearms, weapons and ammunition in question. An employer shall provide information, instruction, and supervision to a worker to protect the health or safety of the worker.

15. Only the appropriate type of blank ammunition should be used. Ammunition made specifically for theatrical use should be obtained in the correct load for the effect required.

- In the event that crimped blanks are used, they should only be commercially manufactured and never reloaded. When crimped blanks are used, consideration should be given to the following safety precautions:
 - i. shatterproof clear plastic shield;
 - ii. eye and ear protection; and
 - iii. sound blankets over camera, operator and focus puller.
- Shot gun popper loads or dog training loads should not be used as they may contain wads that become projectiles and may cause injury. Only those blanks specifically designed for use in motion picture production should be used.
- Factory loaded ammunition should never be tampered with.
- Any safety guidelines or specifications, laid out in handbooks supplied by the manufacturer of a weapon, should be made known to and must be adhered to by all concerned.

16. The crew and other personnel on set should be appropriately warned prior to any firearms being fired. An employer shall acquaint a worker or a person in authority over a worker with any hazard in the work and in the handling, storage, use, disposal and transport of any article, device, equipment or a biological, chemical or physical agent.

17. This guideline should be attached to or noted in the safety section of the Call Sheet when a script requires firearms to be fired on set.

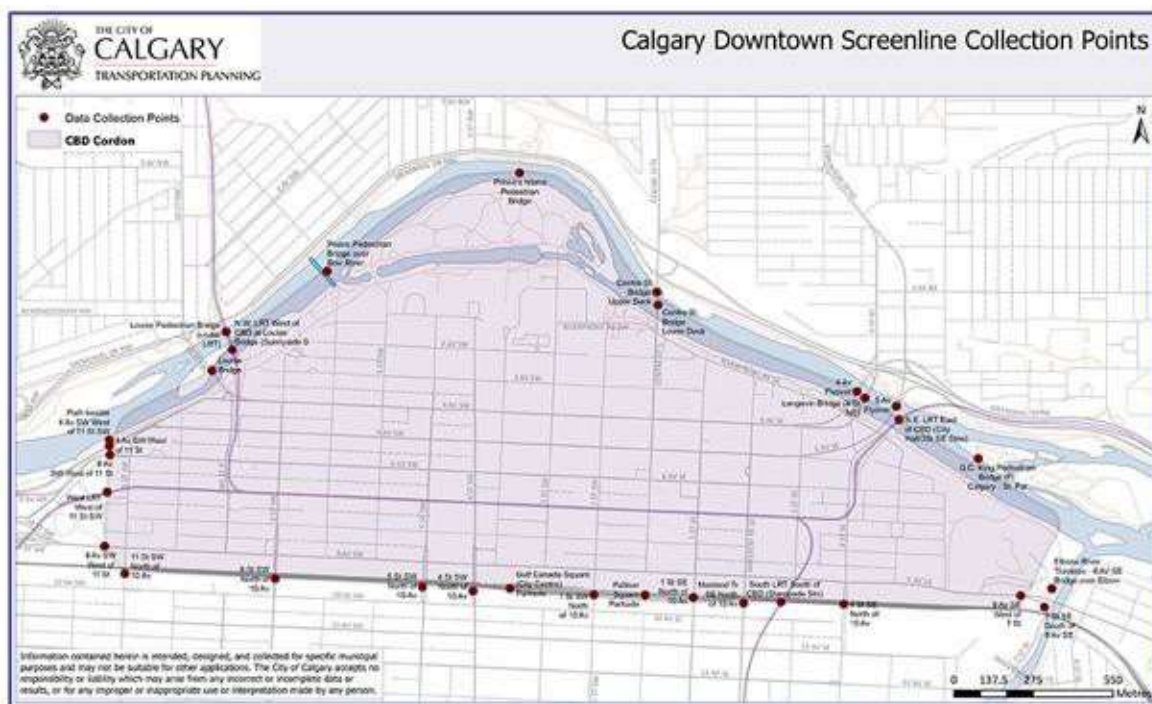
18. If a firearm needs to be fired directly at a camera, consideration should be given to locking off the camera. A shatterproof clear plastic shield should be placed in front of the focus puller and a blanket over the camera person.

19. Any of the firearms that eject a spent casing should be tested to determine the angle of discharge of the spent casing. Make sure all unnecessary people are cleared from the area of the discharge. When actors, cameras or crews must be in the area where casings will be traveling, ensure that they are all at a safe distance or shielded from the firearm. An employer shall take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.

Refueling Requirements

All operators must adhere to City of Calgary Bylaws 13M2004, 23M2005, 60M90

- Refueling cannot be done within 7.5M of a building, in covered parking structure, on public streets, and on public ways and must be done on private property with the owner's permission
- Refueling of diesel generators may be done on public streets as long as the location has no public access and all the following criteria is met.
- As per City of Calgary Bylaw refueling in the downtown core is not allowed between 0600-1800 Monday thru Saturday within the purple area on this map (exempt if carrying less than 400 L of fuel):



- All refuelers shall have a NO SMOKING sign posted on the vehicle at all times
- All refuelers shall be equipped with a fire extinguisher having a minimum rating of 2A 10 BC
- Refuelers shall be equipped with protection to prevent the accumulation of static electric charges during dispensing operations. Protection shall consist of a grounding strap that is permanently connected to the refueling vehicle unit. During dispensing operations, the grounding strap shall be equipped with a clamp or other securing device and attached to the equipment that is being fueled

- All tanks under 450 L must comply with CSA-B620 and or CAN/CGSB-43.146
- Hoses and nozzles used for dispensing of flammable liquids shall be by a means of an approved-type hose equipped with a listed automatic-closing nozzle with or without a latch-open device.
- Refueling vehicles shall be equipped with an emergency pump shut-off switch in the event of an over spill, leak or other hazard.
- All refueling vehicles shall be limited to a maximum of 450 L of flammable liquids, Vehicles in excess of 450 L shall meet all Transport Canada regulations
- Refueling Vehicles shall not be left unattended at any place that would present an extreme fire hazard.
- During fuel dispensing operations, refueling wheels shall be chocked to prevent movement, spillage, or any other hazardous motions.
- Operators refueling mechanically operated equipment (i.e. portable generators etc.) shall ensure all motors are off and not running during dispensing operations.
- All drivers must have current TDG certification and provide that certification if asked by the Fire SCO.

Portable Generators

- Ensure there is an appropriately sized fire extinguisher available and staff are trained in their use
- Inspect the generator for leaky fuel hoses or oil soaked insulation
- Ensure that the generator is not parked beneath a combustible fuel source (i.e., eaves, dry vegetation, fire sprinkler heads or blocking fire protection systems such as fire hydrants, standpipes, fire dept. connections, access ways or exits
- To prevent filming interruptions, production companies require that all generators have been fueled to capacity prior to arriving on location. If a generator is required to be refueled, the generator operator shall shut down the power prior to refueling and ensure that a “no smoking” policy is implemented
- On most generators, exhaust and intake doors open when the generator is started. Ensure that the generator operator has opened the ventilation doors on those generators that require manual operation
- Ensure that the tractor-mounted or the trailer-mounted generator is properly secured and stationary. Emergency brakes and/or chocks should be placed on the wheels to prevent movement.
- Inspect for obvious electrical hazards such as: proper grounding of the generator, frayed electrical cables, proper cable connectors to the bus bars, bus bars protected from unauthorized personnel. Obvious electrical hazards can be remedied by the FSO; however, a licensed electrician or electrical inspector should immediately correct more serious electrical hazards.

Exiting/Exit Routes

- Exit signs shall be posted in a room or area that contains more than 60 persons

- Soundstages and approved production facilities shall maintain an aisle of at least 1 metre along the perimeter of the facility that is free of obstructions for movement as approved by AHJ (Authority Having Jurisdiction) (NFPA 140 4.10.3)
- Occupancy limits shall be maintained. Overcrowding a room can cause a serious life and safety hazard
- Ensure that electrical cables for lighting and power equipment are maintained in a neat and orderly manner. When possible cables should be flown, ramped with cable trays, and/or taped down in an orderly arrangement to prevent tripping hazards or exiting obstructions

Housekeeping

Every building or portion of a building shall be maintained in a neat orderly manner, free from any condition which would add to or contribute to the rapid spread of fire. Provisions shall be made for the proper disposal of waste materials and rubbish consistent with the following:

- Areas not open to continuous observation shall be kept free from combustible litter and rubbish at all times
- All combustible waste material and rubbish shall be stored in an approved manner by the AHJ. Approved containers shall be noncombustible
- Approved self-closing metal containers shall be provided and maintained in areas where combustibles/flammable materials are present
- Ashes shall be placed in approved metal containers until properly removed from the premises
- No dry vegetation shall be permitted to exist within 6 M of any building or occupancy
- Mechanical, switchgear vaults, boiler and electrical rooms shall not be used for storage

A clean and orderly arranged filming location will help Ensure a safe set. The proper storage of combustibles, designated smoking areas with proper disposal, are an important responsibility for the production company.

Specific examples of housekeeping hazards include:

- Accumulation of sawdust and wood scrap from the construction of sets
- Combustible litter and rubbish allowed to accumulate on floors, platforms, sets, stages, and other similar areas.
- Dry vegetation within 6M of any building
- The storage of props, equipment, and materials that may obstruct exits and fire protection equipment and systems (Fire Department access ways; fire extinguishers and hose cabinets; fire sprinkler system valves, heads and connections; standpipes, fire alarm and protection systems)
- Materials which are inherently flammable such as sawdust, hay-bails, trees and plants used for sets and scenery, foams and plastic sets should be treated with an approved fire-retardant material acceptable to the AHJ
- The improper storage or disposal of hazardous materials, especially the use of combustible and flammable liquids.

Welding, Cutting, and Grinding

- Ensure cylinders or containers are properly constructed, charged and marked

- Ensure compressed cylinders are adequately fastened and secured
- Check to see that hoses are properly maintained and are not leaking
- Ensure that appropriate fire extinguishers are maintained and kept in close proximity to the welding, cutting or grinding operation
- Ensure that all welding, cutting, and grinding operations are performed in safe areas. All combustible materials, flammable liquids and pyrotechnic special effects shall be placed in safe areas at least 3M away
- A fire watch is required when welding, cutting, or grinding is being conducted within 3M of combustible materials
- Fire watch shall remain on site for at least 30 minutes after the completion of welding and cutting operations
- Ensure that fire blankets or approved protective coverings are used to protect from hot slag and sparks
- Ensure no more than 150 lbs. of fuel gases are allowed inside buildings
- Ensure that cylinders, valves, regulators, hose and other apparatus are kept free from oil and grease

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in the following areas:

- Any mountainous brush, or forest covered land
- Anywhere pyrotechnic special effects are used and stored
- Anywhere flammable liquids and gases are used or stored (i.e., for pyrotechnic special effects, fuel dispensing and refueling operations.)
- Within a tent or air supported structure
- Near spray or finishing areas

Sources: *Filming in California, Filming in Ontario, City of Calgary, Calgary Economic Development*

Fire Safety Contacts:

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PSU
403-710-5600 Jeffrey.Groves@calgary.ca

Greg Ferguson
Fire Safety Codes Officer
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Gregory.ferguson@calgary.ca

Calgary Police Service Contact:

Sgt. Ben Lawson
Firearm Investigation Unit
pol4331@calgarypolice.ca
403-428-7701

Permitting Contact:

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Calgary Economic Development
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