

# **Safety manual**

**For the students of  
the school of film and television  
at  
Loyola Marymount University**

## **Introduction**

Learning how to safely manage a film set is part of your education at LMU SFTV. The safety skills you practice during your student film shoots will be carried forward into

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As set forth by  
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your career. This manual will provide you with some guidelines to follow regarding film safety.

## **Safety on set**

The equipment used in production can be particularly dangerous and haste and improvisation can put individuals at even greater risk unless they are conscientious of safety at every moment. Failure to observe safety policies may result in the shut down of your production, or worse, serious injury.

### **Preparation**

Safety begins long before the shooting day. It is the responsibility of each crew member to educate themselves about safety and to arrive on set on time, well rested and healthy.

### **The assistant director (A.D.)**

The AD, or Assistant Director, is the primary safety officer on the set, and this responsibility takes precedence above all the other things that the 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Director does. The AD is responsible for the safe conduct of everyone involved in the production and will inform the crew about and enforce appropriate safety precautions. Any safety concerns should immediately be brought to the attention of the 1<sup>st</sup> AD.

The 1<sup>st</sup> AD has the sole authority to shut the production down if there is ever any indication, large or small, that the safety of anyone on the crew for any reason appears to be in jeopardy.

No one else on the crew, not the Director, and not the Producer, has the authority to make the decision of whether or not a situation is safe enough to shoot. The 1<sup>st</sup> AD is solely responsible for making that determination and must always err on the side of caution.

### **safety meeting**

The AD's first duty at the beginning of every shooting day is to conduct a safety meeting with the entire crew present. New and returning crew members must be informed on a daily basis of the safety precautions for that day's shoot; including the locations of fire extinguishers, emergency exits, and the first aid kit. As well as, any special issues

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pertaining to that day's shooting such as stunts to be performed or particularly hazardous rigging.

**Injuries/accidents are to be reported immediately to veronica Hansen in risk mgmt. at 310.261.9181 and john Syrjamaki (HOPA) at 82973**

## **Proper attire**

The AD also checks all crew members to ensure that they are wearing the appropriate attire. It is particularly important that footwear be sturdy sneakers or boots. Sandals or high-heeled shoes of any kind are not permissible.

The AD also checks that all crew members wear well-fitting clothing that is appropriate to the weather. In hot weather, you will want to wear thin clothing and if it is cold you will want to layer your clothing. Loose clothing will be caught in equipment and the 1<sup>st</sup> AD is responsible for having a conversation with the crew member.

## **Heat and Sun**

When shooting outdoors while it is sunny, shade must be provided if it is not readily available; usually in the form of an Easy-Up shade canopy. Light breathable attire and sunscreen should be worn. Proper hydration is even more critical on warm days. Always have plenty of bottled water on hand.

## **Rain and wind**

Proper shelter must be provided if there is rain or the possibility of rain in the forecast. Again, this can be easily remedied in the form of an Easy-Up canopy. Raingear should be worn by all crew.

Lights must be covered by securely placing a large flag above the light and all electrical connections should be wrapped in plastic and kept off the ground so as to avoid it lying in a puddle.

Should it be windy, lights and stands should receive additional sandbagging. Rope can be used to stabilize tall stands. Never set up equipment near power lines.

## **Working with an equipment truck**

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Never let an inexperienced driver behind the wheel of an equipment truck. Only skilled crew members should be working around equipment trucks. Use at least one “spotter” when maneuvering a truck in close quarters. **NEVER LOAD AND LEAVE EQUIPMENT IN AN UNATTENDED VEHICLE OVERNIGHT.**

The contents of your equipment truck can shift during transport so take care in opening doors so that no injuries occur.

The gate lift on an equipment truck is powerful and can cause serious injury. Operation of the lift should be performed by one crew member at a time. The crew member should be experienced in the operation and should always alert those nearby before operating the equipment. Those not operating the lift should remain at least five feet away.

## **Moving equipment**

Equipment should be moved only by experienced crew members. If an object is heavy and unwieldy then appropriate measures should be taken to relocate the equipment with the necessary crew to safely move it.

## **Power distribution**

The Gaffer is responsible for all power distribution from on-set lighting to extension cords for craft services. Cables should be run together out of foot traffic areas as much as possible. When cables must be run across any area where they could present a tripping hazard they must be secured with tape or rubber matting. It's a good idea never to use duct tape for anything associated with a location shoot. It leaves a sticky residue on anything it touches and can take the finish off floors, pull pile off carpets and the paint off walls.

Electrical and audio cables at outdoor shoots are especially dangerous since there's no way to tape them down. One solution is to tape them into a bundle with gaffer's tape, and tag the bundle liberally with yellow "Danger" tape. Keep the bundle out of paths, walks and stairways as much as possible. To make bundles doubly secure, make narrow "croquet wickets" (wire staples) out of heavy gage iron wire - coat hanger wire or heavier, for example - by bending the wire into a narrow "U." Make the wickets about nine to twelve inches long and use them to pin cable bundles to the ground.

When using power on location, particular care must be taken not to overload circuits. Only the Gaffer should be plugging in a cable or light.

## **Stands and Rigging**

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The Grip is responsible for all rigging. Which means anything that needs to be hung or put on a stand; this includes the setting of light stands. When carrying a stand, the warning “points coming through” should be stated clearly and loudly so that crew members have time to move if necessary. All stands in use on set must be sandbagged according to their load or precarious position.

C-Stands must be set correctly. A C-Stand’s arm is designed to extend over the knuckle with the load on the side toward which the knuckle tightens. Therefore, if the load forces the arm to slip, it will actually tighten and stop. If the rear of the C-Stand arm extends out beyond the base, a marker should be attached to it so that it can clearly be seen.

Tripods are especially dangerous because their bulk - the camera and monitor - is near eye level. People see the camera but often fail to register the tripod legs sticking out below. Placing camera cases, bags and packs under tripods creates bulk around the legs and reduces the danger of tripping.

## **Dollies**

Grips are also responsible for the dolly. Once dolly tracks have been set, the crew must be careful not to trip on the tracks. Heavy dollies should not be lifted but ramped onto their tracks with wedges. Once on the track, the dolly should be prevented from rolling off the track with clamps. On set, the Dolly Grip is the only person permitted to mount a dolly.

## **walls**

Ask before you hang anything from the walls, even if you plan to use gaffer's tape. And while on that subject, if you should happen to do damage to a surface, since even gaffer's tape can stick too well on occasion, own up to the damage and offer to pay to have it repaired.

## **MINORS**

Minors on set must be accompanied by a parent and a certified Studio Teacher.

## **ANIMALS**

Animals on set must be accompanied by an Animal Wrangler.

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Actors should not be expected to be as aware of hazards on set as a crew member would. It is the responsibility of the crew to make them aware of potential hazards.

## **Meals**

If meals are served on set, make sure there's enough for all. The first meal should be available within six hours of crew call and a minimum of a half hour should be allotted for the meal.

Food and non-alcoholic beverages should be available to the cast and crew throughout the day. Cast and crew who lack energy and focus are a hazard on set. Healthy snacks help keep your crew alert and active.

## **Driving shots**

Any shot sequences that require a camera to be in a moving vehicle must be approved by the HOPA. The use of camera mounts must also be approved in advance by HOPA and Risk Management.

## **Company moves**

Should it be necessary to change locations in the middle of a shooting day, the company move must be handled carefully in spite of the temptation to rush to the next location. A safety meeting must be held at the new location before filming resumes.

## **Fire, stunts and firearms**

Candles and cigarettes should be handled with great care on set. Any larger fire used on set, even a large group of candles must be approved by Risk Management and must be supervised by a paid Fire Marshall.

All stunts must be planned by a professional and approved by HOPA and reviewed by our insurance carrier for potential hazards. Crew members need to be made aware of all aspects of any stunt before it is executed.

Only non-firing, replica guns or rubber guns are permitted on set. Blanks, squibs or real guns are never permitted on set. The prop weapon must be rented from an approved rental house. Plastic or "fake" guns are never permitted on set. HOPA must approve using a prop weapon on set. Prop knives also are to be rented from an approved rental house and real knives are to never be brought on set. **A FIREARMS POLICY**

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT MUST BE SIGNED AND SUBMITTED TO HOPA AND RISK MANAGEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR.**

## **Working at night**

Work lights should be set up for night sets and extra precautions taken. Trip hazards need even more attention and all crew members should use flashlights in poorly lit areas.

## **Length of shoot and turnaround**

No shooting day should exceed twelve hours and the AD must make sure that there is at least twelve hours of turnaround, meaning the amount of time between one day's wrap and the next day's call time. After a fifteen or seventeen hour shoot it is not safe to wrap up and drive home.

## **wrap**

Enough time must be allowed within the twelve-hour workday to have an orderly wrap. Extra care must be taken because the crew is tired and may be working in darkness. At night, the work light should be the last piece of equipment loaded.

**Report unsafe conduct to risk management or HOPA! Reports of unsafe conduct will be kept anonymous and confidential**

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