

# **FIRE SAFETY REGULATIONS**

## **FOR DECORATIONS**

Prepared by  
Stillwater Fire Department  
and OSU Environmental Health & Safety

**These regulations shall apply to all events, displays, etc. in which  
the general public will be in attendance.**

Off-Campus Information, Call 742-8308 -- Stillwater Fire Marshal

On-Campus Information, Call 744-7241 – University Fire Marshal

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## SECTION 1: GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUIRED FIRE INSPECTION

University and City regulations require that any event either on or off campus utilizing decorations must obtain a fire inspection. This inspection must be completed and the proper form signed by the fire inspector **before** such an event can be held. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization to make contact with the proper authorities as required and to ensure adherence to these regulations.

## SECTION 2: PRE-EVENT CONFERENCE

It is required that you discuss all proposed decoration plans at a pre-event conference with the Stillwater Fire Department (off campus) or the OSU Environmental Health & Safety Department (on campus) not less than 10 working days in advance. At this time you will also make arrangements for the required inspection of the event. A sketch of the area to be used showing rooms, exits, seating, aisles, dimensions, etc. should be brought to this conference by those proposing the event.

If the planned decoration is deemed major, SFD and EHS can require a building permit. This permit may be issued at the pre-event conference if you bring an adequate sketch of the decoration and documentation of a utility clearance or “OKIE Check” (see Section 3).

**Applicants requesting a permit for public events can be denied based on significant fire code violations contrary to the International Fire Code, as adopted by the City of Stillwater related to the conditions found during routine annual fire inspections during the year prior to the event.**

**Permit applications can also be denied based on significant life safety violations as recognized by Stillwater Fire Department and OSU Environmental Health and Safety during the year prior to the event. Such violations may be assessed any penalties provided for by law, in conjunction with denial of a public event permit.**

## SECTION 3: CLEARANCE FOR UTILITIES

In many areas, utilities are placed underground. These may include electrical lines, gas lines, water lines, telephone lines, and the like. Indiscriminate drilling for the installation of poles, pipes or other parts of decorations may inadvertently damage such utilities and/or cause injury.

Before any such drilling is done, necessary clearance must be obtained in writing from the appropriate utilities. In the City of Stillwater, contact Okie Line Locate (800) 522-6543, and the City Fire Marshal, at 742-8308. On campus, contact Facilities Management at 744-7154 and Okie Line Locate (800) 522-6543.

## SECTION 4: PROHIBITED MATERIALS

Baled or loose hay or straw	Split bamboo
Cane poles	Styrofoam
Paper and wood frame walls or partitions	Oil-Base enamel paint
Black or clear plastic sheeting	Wood chips or shavings
Cardboard walls or partitions	Parachutes or Papier-mâché

## SECTION 5: DEFINITIONS

1. **Decorative materials** shall include (but are not limited to) all such materials as draperies, curtains, streamers, and surface coverings applied over the building interior finish for decorative, acoustical, or other effects (this includes cloth, cotton batting, foam plastics, paper or paper products, straw, vines, leaves, trees, and moss used for decorative effect). But it shall not include floor coverings, ordinary window shades, or materials 1/40-inch or less in thickness\* applied directly to and adhering tightly to a non-combustible base.

\*Thickness may be measured by folding a piece of the material to 5 thicknesses and measuring to see if the thickness of 5 layers exceeds 1/8-inch.

2. **Place of assembly** shall mean a room or space used for assembly for 50 or more occupants. Such room or space shall include any similar occupied connecting room or space in the same story, or in a story or stories above and below, where entrance is common to the rooms or space.
3. **Shall-** indicating that something must happen or somebody is obliged to do something because of a rule or law

## SECTION 6: DECORATIVE MATERIAL

### Points Deducted (5 each)

1. No decorative material shall be used which, when applied, will ignite and allow flame to spread over the surface or allow burning particles to drop when exposed to a match flame test.

The match flame test is applied to a small piece of material removed from the larger section of material and tested in a safe place. The piece, 1½" x 4", shall be held in a vertical position and the bottom edge exposed to a flame from a common match held in a horizontal position, one-half inch underneath the piece, and at a constant location for a minimum of 12 seconds.

## SECTION 7: EXIT WAYS

1. No person shall, at any time, place an obstacle of any kind before or upon any fire escape, balcony or ladder intended as a means of escape from fire. No person shall place, store or keep or permit to be placed, stored or kept any flammable materials on or under or at the bottom of any exit stairway (inside or outside), exit hallway, elevator, or other means of exit. No bridges, ropes, fences, etc. may be placed where they will block or restrict full use of exits or entrances to a building or room. All doors in or leading to required exit ways shall be kept unlocked at all times when the building or floor area served thereby is occupied.
2. In rooms accommodating 50 or more occupants, all required exit doorways (other than those normally used for entrance) shall be plainly marked by approved exit signs that are sufficiently illuminated as to be readily visible when the floor area is occupied. Where the exit doorways are not visible from all locations in public corridors, directional signs, as required by the Stillwater Fire Department or OSU Environmental Health & Safety Department, shall be placed on walls or otherwise displayed in conspicuous locations to direct occupants to exit doorways.
3. Required stairways, hallways, and other means of exit (including exterior open spaces to or through which exit ways lead) shall be adequately lighted at all times that the building served thereby is occupied.

4. It shall be unlawful to block open any stairway enclosure that leads to or from a floor of the building and which by law is required to be self-closing.
5. The use of tunnel, chutes, etc. within a room or space for access, entrance, or exit purposes is prohibited.
6. All places of assembly or rooms accommodating 50 or more occupants shall have at least 2 exits.

## **SECTION 8: AISLES**

### **Points Deducted (5 each)**

In each room where chairs or tables and chairs are used, the arrangement shall be such as will provide for ready access by aisles to each exit doorway. Aisles leading directly to exit doorway shall have not less than 36 inches clear width, which shall not be obstructed by chairs or other objects. All seating plans shall be submitted for approval at the pre-event conference.

## **SECTION 9: NUMBER OF OCCUPANTS PERMITTED**

### **Points Deducted (5 each)**

The maximum number of occupants permitted shall be determined by an occupancy evaluation conducted by the City of Stillwater Fire Marshal or the OSU University Fire Marshal.

## **SECTION 10: FIRE CONTROL**

### **Points Deducted (10 each)**

1. All fire protection equipment shall be in working order and shall be visible and readily accessible at all times. Sufficient fire extinguishers shall be on hand to protect areas in accordance with nationally recognized practices. – see Section 13, paragraph 12.
  - a. Inside the house or building: fire alarm and fire sprinklers shall be fully functional and all installed fire extinguishers shall be readily accessible, properly maintained and in good working condition.
  - b. Outside: required fire protection equipment minimum requirement shall include one 10lb ABC extinguisher and a one half-inch garden hose connected to a pressurized water source.
2. At least one person shall be assigned to watch for fire and shall be instructed to promptly call the Fire Department by means of telephone or other approved alarm device in the event of fire or suspicion of fire and to direct evacuation of occupants.
3. Welding Procedures -- see Section 13, paragraph 11.

## **SECTION 11: ELECTRICAL**

### **Points Deducted (5 each)**

1. All wiring, controls, lights, appliances, or other electrical equipment used as part of or in conjunction with decorations shall be installed in an approved manner and be of sufficient design and capacity to take the electrical load required.

2. Where extension cords are necessary, only heavy-duty rubber-coated #14 AWG or larger grounded extension cords will be used. No additional multiple outlets shall be used in conjunction with extension cords (octopus plugs). Extension cords shall not be ran through doors or out windows.
3. There shall be no open splices, frayed wiring, cracked insulation, defective equipment or other indications of weakness permitted in wiring.
4. No open or unguarded light bulbs, spotlights, floodlights, etc. shall be permitted to be in contact with any combustible surface. Such devices shall be securely anchored in place to prevent accidental upsetting if struck. Heat from the device shall not create a fire or burn hazard to the occupants or the general public.
5. All temporary wiring splices / junctions shall be made inside a covered electrical box and shall have wire nuts and electrical tape on all splices / junctions.
6. All electrical cords shall be protected from physical harm and shall not run unprotected across walkways. Electrical cords shall not present a tripping hazard. All outdoor electrical cords shall be plugged into a GFCI receptacle.

## **SECTION 12: OPEN FLAMES**

### **Points Deducted (5 each)**

The use of unguarded fires or flames in fireplaces, candles\*, or in any other forms shall not be permitted.

\*Candles may be used on tables if well secured in a solid, stable, non-combustible base with a glass globe or similar approved device at least two inches higher than the candle flame with prior approval from the City of Stillwater Fire Marshal or the University Fire Marshal.

## **SECTION 13: OUTDOOR DECORATIONS AND FLOATS**

### **Points Deducted (Individually)**

NOTE: ® denotes a required item.

1. ® **Floats** may not be over 15 feet high.
2. ® **House decorations** shall not be more than 20 feet high and be placed no less than 10 feet from a building or appurtenance thereof and shall be self-supporting. No portion of any decoration shall be any closer than 10 feet below any overhead wiring and shall be at least 15 feet back from said overhead wiring. All living groups shall comply with this section unless the structure of their yard makes it impossible to comply; in such a case, written permission must be obtained from the Stillwater Fire Marshall or the OSU University Fire Marshal.
3. ® **it** shall be the responsibility of the organization constructing the decoration or floats to furnish the correct address where the construction will take place. It is also the responsibility of the organization to notify City of Stillwater Fire Marshal, University Fire Marshal and the Alumni Association before construction begins. Protective Barriers / fencing shall be set up prior to the start of construction and during disassembly.
4. Points Deducted--5. Each entry shall be furnished with an inspection card at the time of registration. This must be signed by a designated member of the Stillwater Fire Department or OSU Environmental Health & Safety Department. Each decoration or float shall be inspected during construction before it is eligible for judging.

5. Points Deducted--5. No float or pre-fabricated decorations that could block or deter access of emergency vehicles or encounter overhead wiring shall be built or stored in alleys or similar access ways.
6. Points Deducted--5. House decorations must be at least 3 feet away from exterior gas lighting fixtures.
7. Points Deducted--5. No decoration shall be closer than 1 foot from any public sidewalk and shall not overlap at any point. All work areas for any outdoor decorations shall be fenced off using approved fencing material, this fencing material shall remain in good repair and secure at all times. The location of the fence shall be added to the pre-event sketch for approval.
8. Points Deducted--2. To provide a safe working area, all tools and construction material shall be kept in proper order and out of possible danger when not in use. Good housekeeping is a requirement for a safe Homecoming.
9. Points Deducted--10. All wiring shall conform to Section 11 of these regulations.
10. Points Deducted--10. **"No Smoking"** shall be observed in the vicinity of outdoor decoration and floats during the periods of their construction, use and demolition.
11. Points Deducted--10. **Welding or open flames shall not be permitted in the vicinity of floats or decorations after covering materials are installed.** Dedicated fire watch personnel shall stand by with fire extinguisher and /or hose and observe strict fire precautions whenever welding operations are in progress. Fire watch shall maintain the fire watch precautions for a minimum of 30 minutes after the hot work has ceased. Signs shall be posted at construction sites warning onlookers not to look at welding arcs. Approved personal protective equipment shall be worn by those doing the hot work. Any acetylene tanks and any other fuel used during welding/cutting operations shall not be stored in a residential building.
12. Points Deducted--10. Fire extinguishing equipment shall be kept readily accessible and in operating order. Such equipment shall be available within reach of any such outdoor decoration. (Fire extinguishers are not to be "borrowed" from their designated locations in buildings.)  
  
*Two (2), Five (5) pound ABC fire extinguishers or One (1), Ten (10) pound ABC fire extinguishers are required to meet the qualifications for this section.*  
  
\*A pre-connected garden hose of 1/2" minimum diameter shall be used in addition to a portable extinguisher for outside decorations.
13. Points Deducted--5. All ground stakes and support stakes less than 6 feet tall shall be properly covered at all times. Aluminum cans are unacceptable for this purpose. Tennis balls, rubber balls, and folded garden hose are among the items that may be used as covers.
14. Points Deducted--3. All ground stakes, guide wires and support ropes or strings less than 7 feet above the ground shall be clearly marked with a bright visible cloth or tape to prevent possible injury.
15. Points Deducted--7. Suitable fire extinguishing equipment shall be readily available on a float or within the vehicle beneath or in front of the float on the day of the parade. **Absence of a working and properly maintained fire extinguisher will mean disqualification.**
16. Points Deducted--10. Exhaust pipes on float vehicles or stationary engines shall have suitable fine mesh screens on the ends to prevent sparks from possible backfires from igniting the float or decoration. All exhaust equipment including extensions shall be provided with exhaust pipe extensions to prevent the accumulation of carbon-monoxide beneath the float.



17. Points Deducted--10. Escape routes of sufficient size, strength, and number shall be provided for all persons pumping and riding in or on floats. The fire marshal will advise the living groups of any needed escape routes before construction is to begin. Failure to comply with this regulation will result in point deduction, reconstruction, and/or disqualification.
  1. Pumping rooms shall meet the following:
    - a. All racks and pumping shall not be closer than 18 inches from fire sprinkler heads.
    - b. All isles in the pumping area shall be at least 36 inches wide.
    - c. All pumping racks shall be 4 feet away from the walls and other racks.
18. Points Deducted--20. Open flames or fires shall not be permitted as part of any decoration or float.
19. Points Deducted--10. Any flammable-type materials shall be flame proofed in accordance with Section 14 of these regulations.
20. Points Deducted--10. All house decorations must be completed by 2:00 p.m., Friday, the day of Walkaround. This includes all operating moving parts.
21. Paper and other materials on outdoor decorations that could be easily blown away by the wind shall be removed within 48 hours following the event for which they are used.
22. All holes shall remain covered until filled and then be filled in level with the surrounding ground. This shall be completed immediately after the poles or other materials are removed from the holes.
23. **Disqualification of all participating parties from next year's homecoming competition if the following are not completed.**
  1. Any remaining frames and other structures of outdoor decorations shall be removed by Friday at 4:30 p.m. following the Saturday Homecoming game.
24. In the event of inclement weather house decorations shall only be covered with non-combustible or flame retardant tarps as approved by SFD or OSU- EHS. No exceptions!

#### **SECTION 14: FLAME PROOFING**

1. The process of treating materials so that they will not support combustion shall be approved prior to application of flame proofing chemicals.
2. Flame proofing chemicals shall only be approved for those materials that are specifically listed by the manufacturer for application.
3. Flame proofing or fire retardant liquids shall be applied in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and particular attention must be paid to coverage rates.
4. Homemade flame proofing solutions will no longer be approved.
5. Materials treated with flame proofing will require a match flame test as described in section 6.

#### **SECTION 15: LADDERS**

1. Step ladders greater than 10 feet in length are not permitted.

2. No persons shall stand on the top two rungs of any ladder.
3. Ladders shall rest on a solid and level support. If there is danger of the ground being soft or becoming soft due to rain or other means, a 24" x 24" or larger square of plywood, metal or similar material shall be placed under each side of a ladder to prevent it from sinking into the ground.
4. Ladders shall be sturdy and free of dents, bends, loose hinges, loose steps, cracks, burrs, and other defects.
5. All extension ladders will be secured to the house deck. While extended and in use.

## SECTION 16: SCAFFOLDS

### Point Deducted (Individually)

#### When erected, scaffolding shall be stable and secure at all times as follows:

1. **MANDATORY** – Fall protection shall be used at all times while working from any height greater than 6 feet above the ground. Including from cat walks, scaffolding, or gasoline or electric-powered lifts, No exceptions.
2. Fall protection (full-body harness and approved lanyard) must prevent the wearer from striking the ground or surface below and limit free fall to six feet or less. Short positioning lanyards should be used in most situations to prevent the person from leaving the work platform in case of a fall.
3. Points Deducted--5. Scaffolding shall be secured at intervals of 12 feet to a solid support that will brace the scaffolding in a secure manner. Securing shall be by means of wire, cable, etc.
4. Points Deducted--5. Scaffolding shall be metal, interlocking safety-type with approved ladders on each end of the scaffolding. Ladders may be a part of the scaffolding itself.
5. Points Deducted--5. The scaffolding shall rest on solid and level support. If there is a danger of the ground being soft or becoming soft due to rain, etc., then large squares of plywood, metal, or other stable material shall be placed under each leg of the scaffold to prevent it from sinking into the ground.
6. Points Deducted--3. Scaffold on wheels shall have wheels that can be locked in place (caster brakes) and shall be provided with supports under each wheel as stated above. Wheeled scaffolding shall not be moved with any person, materials, or equipment upon the scaffolding.
7. Points Deducted--10. At working levels 6 feet and higher, flooring shall be solid from side to side on the scaffold and shall be secured in place with substantial cleats so it cannot slide in any direction. Approved handrails at least 42" high with mid-rails shall be installed on each open side of each working level to keep persons from falling from the scaffold. Four-inch toe boards shall be installed to prevent tools and other items from being kicked off of the scaffold and falling on persons below. Only scaffold-grade wood planking or fabricated planking and decking meeting scaffold use requirements shall be used.
8. Points Deducted--5. **Scaffolds shall not be moved until reduced below 7 feet in height.** Sufficient help shall be available to move the scaffold and to control it from toppling. Watchers shall be posted to watch overhead obstructions or hazards (utility lines) as well as holes, etc. at ground level.
9. Points Deducted--10. Ladders or other makeshift devices shall not be used on scaffolds to gain extra height.

10. Points Deducted--10. At no time shall there be scaffolding higher than 18 feet without permission from the City Fire Marshal, or the University Fire Marshal.

## SECTION 17: AERIAL (BOOM) LIFTS AND SCISSOR LIFTS



Safety Harness

Automated lifts provide a safer, more effective means of working at heights. A full-body harness SHALL be required for the worker who will be using the lift (see Section 16.2 for fall protection system requirements). *Never* use a ladder or other makeshift device to increase the working height of the lift. **100% tie-off is required any time the worker needs to climb out of an aerial lift or scissor lift onto an elevated location.**

Remember to get complete operating instructions from the equipment rental agency.

All operators must be properly trained to use the specific piece of equipment.



Aerial Lift

The **aerial (or boom) lift** is designed to be repositioned when the worker is in the elevated basket. Therefore, the worker is required to wear a full-body harness with a lanyard due to the potential of being bounced out of the basket. The basket shall be placed in its lowest position when the wheels are in motion.



Scissor Lift

Because of its low clearance, a **scissor lift** can become unstable on uneven or soft ground. To provide a level working surface, the lift must be placed on plywood that is at least ¾" thick. If the platform railings or entry gate are not in place, the worker SHALL wear a full-body harness with a lanyard. Lower the platform to its lowest level before moving the lift into position. Make certain that the tires are properly inflated and undamaged.

All Scissor Lift control panels shall require dual activation by the operator to activate the directional (horizontal or vertical movement) controls. Time-delay ramping feature activation controls are not permitted. Examples of approved dual controls are:

- Joystick with guarded trigger mechanism
- Joystick with enable switch with a time-out function of 10 seconds or less.
- Joystick with separate enable switch (continuously pressed)
- Joystick with pull-up trigger
- Foot pedal + joystick

It is required that all lifts stay on fraternity property and avoid all sidewalks and streets. However if absolutely necessary, the Homecoming Executive team will work with the particular living groups on a case-by-case basis to allow them short temporary access to the immediate sidewalk. In such an event, at least two members of the living group must be on each side of the lift and be on standby to move equipment off the sidewalk as a result of approaching pedestrians.

Failure to abide by this rule will result in future restriction of lifts limited to scissor and scaffolding only, as well as revocation of the living group's current building permit."

### **SECTION 18: HOLES AND PITS**

1. Excavations deeper than 4 feet and less than 15 feet in width shall have proper shoring or the excavation's sides shall be brought back to an approved angle of repose.
2. Excavation spoil shall be placed at least 2 feet from the edge of excavations deeper than 4 feet regardless of width.
3. All excavations shall be covered substantially or have fencing around the entire perimeter. Fencing shall be a minimum of 42 inches in height. Fencing shall not permit a sphere 6 inches in diameter to pass through. Fencing must be rigidly and independently supported throughout. Covers must be capable of supporting a minimum weight of 500 lb.

### **SECTION 19: GUARDING**

Moving parts shall be guarded such that fingers, hair, clothing, etc. cannot contact the moving parts. This applies to, but is not limited to:

Rotating shafts  
Belt, rope and chain drives  
Pulleys  
Hinges  
Fan Blades  
etc.

**Exception:** Moving parts 7 feet above the walking or working surface need not be guarded.

### **SECTION 20: ALCOHOL USE**

#### **Points Deducted (10)**

Use of alcohol is **absolutely** prohibited.

### **SECTION 21: HUMAN PARTICIPATION**

Human participation will be allowed on floats at the discretion of the Stillwater Fire Marshal. No human interaction is allowed on the House Decoration. Only the starting and rewinding of cassette tapes is allowed. Violations of this rule will result in disqualification of the entry.

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