

Theater and Stage Safety - Central York High School

PURPOSE:

It is the policy of Central York School District to maintain a reasonably safe environment for its students, staff, and visitors. This policy outlines operating procedures and practices to help maintain theater, stage, and shop environments in a safe and compliant manner at all times. This policy will be reviewed by a Building administrator, the Technical Director and the Auditorium Coordinator on an annual basis.

SCOPE:

Students interested in working backstage will participate in a theater safety and awareness program before they may begin working backstage. Students may not work in any of these areas until they also receive training in safety and use of hand and power tools, equipment, and accessories for lighting, rigging, audio, painting and construction activities, or other activities that might take place in the theater and stage environment.

Any worker who feels that a piece of equipment or an activity is hazardous may refuse to use that equipment or do that activity.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Safety Hazards can usually be prevented by staying alert and asking questions when the answer isn't obvious. "Horse play" will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Student and employees are urged to think safety at all times. Failure to follow the safety rules could result in serious injury or death. Do not take chances. If a procedure or situation in the shop or theatre seems dangerous, ask the Tech Director or Auditorium Coordinator before proceeding any further.

A. General Use of Production Facilities

1. Safety Glasses must be worn any time anyone is involved with building or strike. (Painters do not have to use safety glasses, except for spray paint). It is suggested that safety glasses be worn during all tech sessions.
2. Ear protection is provided and it is highly suggested that they be used when around any power tools.
3. Hard hats are provided and must be worn any time work is being done on the rigging or on a higher platform.
4. Students may not be in any of the facilities without adult supervision.

5. Students may not operate any equipment without direct supervision from the Technical Director or Auditorium Coordinator.
6. Rigging, construction, painting, and strikes are not permitted in any shop area prior approval from Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator.
7. Students may work in stage and shop areas between the hours of 6:00 am and midnight as long as the technical director or another qualified supervisor is present. Additional regulations apply to rigging.
8. The Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator must be present when lights are being rigged and struck.
9. The Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator or qualified member of the staff must be present when scenery is being built, rigged, moved, struck, or weights are being changed on any of the counterweight systems.
10. All staff and students operating power or hand tools must have completed a safety orientation administered by the Technical Director.
11. All staff and students participating in the technical theater aspects of the show must be given a theater safety orientation prior to their involvement in technical rehearsals. The technical director will coordinate all safety training and maintains all associated records.
12. Food and drink are prohibited in the auditorium and control booths.
13. All work areas must be cleaned up and tools put away at the end of each work session.
14. Only students who have been fully trained may operate any sound, lighting or rigging equipment.
15. No student is permitted to access the catwalks above the auditorium or above the stage. The rare exception would be a fully trained student with Tech Director or Auditorium Coordinator direct supervision.
16. Access to the weight bridge and catwalks shall be locked and only accessible to the Technical Director, Auditorium Coordinator and District Maintenance.
17. Students may not be involved in welding unless properly trained by the Technical Director.
18. The entire facility shall undergo a safety inspection by the Technical Director and Auditorium Coordinator annually which will then be reviewed with and submitted to the building administration.
19. In the event of an injury the Technical Director or Auditorium Coordinator should be notified and apply first aid on the scene. The Technical Director or Auditorium Coordinator will call the student's parents and the Building Principal or District Superintendent if the injury is beyond minor first aid. An accident report will be filled out for all accidents/injuries and submitted to the building principal.
20. Participants are urged to think safety at all times. Failure to follow the safety rules could result in serious injury or death. Do not take chances. If in doubt, ask a supervisor. If a procedure or situation in the shop or theater seems dangerous, ask a supervisor before beginning any activity.

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B. Audio/Visual Equipment, Hazards, and Safe Working Practices

The use of audio/visual equipment in theater is accompanied by the risk of electrical shock, burns, and physical injury from contact with the hot metal, glass, electrical connectors and cables, both hanging and on the floor. Do not use or handle any audio/visual equipment without proper training and authorization.

1. The rigging of audio/visual equipment is to be done only under staff supervision.
2. All electrical, floor, hand tool, ladder, lift, lighting, noise level, obstruction, overhead work area, and rigging rules apply when working with audio/visual equipment.
3. All audio/visual cables in working and walking areas are to be properly dressed and taped down.
4. Return unused equipment, cable, and accessories to proper storage areas when work is complete.
5. Report any damaged equipment to a supervisor; tag and remove all damaged equipment from circulation.
6. Report any hazards to a supervisor immediately.
7. Safety cables are required on all hanging audio/visual equipment.

C. Chemicals, Hazards and Safe Working Practices

Many solvents, adhesives, enamel, spray paints, and Styrofoam are used in the scene shop and stage areas. Many of these chemicals produce toxic fumes and gasses and are extremely flammable. Consult the MSDS for proper handling and hazards of each specific chemical.

1. Wear the protective clothing and equipment for the job.
2. Prevent ingestion of chemicals. Wash hand frequently. Do not eat, drink, smoke, or apply lip balm around chemicals.
3. Keep workplace clean and free of debris.
4. Solvents such as paint thinner, lacquer thinner, alcohol, and acetone must be used in well ventilated areas.
5. Spray paints must be used in well ventilated areas.
6. Eye protection must be worn when handling chemicals.
7. In case of a chemical spill, notify the Technical Director or Auditorium Coordinator.
8. Waste chemicals must be disposed of properly.
9. Flammable chemicals are to be stored in safety cans and in properly labeled flammable storage cabinets.

D. Electricity, Hazards and Safe Working Practices

Electricity is present everywhere in the shop and stage areas. The risk of electrical shock is present at all times due to the constant changes in work areas, lighting positions, and heavy use of electrical equipment and accessories.

1. All electrical repair work is to be performed only by trained and qualified staff employees.
2. Electrical rigging is to be performed only under the direct supervision of the Technical Director or his designee.
3. Only properly grounded tools, cords, and equipment may be used.
4. Never run extension cords across doorways, walkways, room divisions, through windows, or holes in walls or floors.
5. Check all equipment and cords for damage before use.
6. Remove damaged equipment from use and notify Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator
7. Be alert for extension cords on the floor and in work areas.
8. Do not overload extension cords; only one tool per extension cord.
9. Be aware of overhead and floor mounted lighting fixtures and power cables in stage areas.
10. All shop, stage, ladder, lift, and rigging rules apply to electrical safety.
11. Heat resistant, insulated gloves should be worn when focusing lighting equipment or changing lamps.
12. Hard hats must be worn when persons are working overhead and when battens are being rigged at deck level.
13. Do not overload theater circuits; see Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator for questions on proper amperage levels.
14. Use the shortest extension cable possible.
15. All lighting equipment must have a safety cable. Attach first, disconnect last.
16. Completely dry your hands before touching electrical switches, plugs, or receptacles.
17. Notify appropriate district personnel of any hazardous electrical condition immediately.

E. Floors, Hazards and Safe Working Practices

Floors in the shop and stage areas are often covered with many hazards and obstructions due to flexible work areas in the building. Some of the floor hazards associated with the floor include, but are not limited to: open traps in stage floor, wet floors due to painting and spills, obstructions include tools, power cords, air hoses, materials, and scenery.

1. Stay alert to changes in work conditions.
2. Clean up spills as they occur.

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3. Clean up tools, materials, and obstructions when finished with the project or when leaving it for an extended period of time.
4. Mark and block off entrances to wet painted floor areas.
5. Put away cords and hoses when the job is completed.
6. Do not block aisles, hallways, fire exits, doorways, fire doors, fire equipment, first aid kits, or electrical panels.
7. Notify shop the Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator / appropriate District personnel of any unsafe condition immediately.

F. Hand Tools, Hazards and Safe Working Practices

Hand tools are often overlooked as safety hazards. Be careful. Many tools have sharp edges, blades, springs, etc. that can cause severe injuries.

1. Use the proper tool for the job.
2. Maintain tools in good condition. Report damaged tools to the Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator and remove them from service until they are repaired or replaced.
3. Store and carry tools properly. Put them away when work is complete.
4. Be sure hands are free of dirt and grease as possible.
5. When using or carrying a sharp edged tool, point the sharp edge away from the worker. Do not carry sharp edged tools in pocket.
6. Wear proper safety equipment at all times. While work is being done in the scene shop, the shop, stage, and any working location, students, and visitors must wear safety glasses.

G. Ladders, Hazards and Safe Working Practices

The use of ladders in the shop and stage areas is a common occurrence. Falls from ladders can cause severe injury to one's self just as falling objects from a ladder can cause injury to one's self as well as others. Safe ladder practices are essential at all times.

1. Check ladders for broken or damaged parts each use. Never use a damaged ladder. Report any damaged ladder to the Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator, label it, and remove it from service.
2. Only one person on a ladder at a time.
3. Do not place a ladder in front of a door that opens onto the ladder unless the door is blocked open, locked from access, and/or guarded.
4. Do not place ladders on boxes or any other object to obtain extra height.
5. Always face the ladder when ascending or descending.
6. Never leave anything unattended on top of a ladder or on the steps of a ladder.

7. Do not lean over or overreach from a ladder.
8. Make sure the ladder is fully open and the spreaders are locked.
9. Never reposition a ladder while on it.
10. Store ladders in their proper location after use.
11. Students may not use a ladder without someone else present in the area.
12. Store ladders in their proper location after use.

H. Working on the Fly-Rail

1. Before entering the fly-rail area, all contents from pockets should be removed. This will eliminate the possibility of dropping things on persons below.
2. All tools should be secured to the individual by a tie line or lanyard.
3. When working on the fly-rail (loading or unloading weight), the area around the fly rail (from down stage to upstage and out to the edge of the soft goods) must be secured and free of bystanders. A floor monitor must be present or the area locked to prevent anyone from entering the restricted area.
4. Loading and un-loading weight on loading rails must be done in the company of a technical director or his designee.
5. Report any frays in the rope or difficulty in operating the pulley system to the technical director / Auditorium Coordinator immediately.

I. Lifts, Hazards and Safe Working Practices

Any personnel lift equipment can be dangerous without training on its use. Extreme caution should be used before operating this system as damage to property as well as self and others can occur.

1. Students are only permitted to use the Genie Lift under direct supervision of the Technical Director.
2. The unit must be used on a flat and level surface.
3. Do not exceed the maximum load rating. This includes the operator and all equipment.
4. Do not operate the lift on an elevated, scaffold, truck bed, or extended platform.
5. Only one person is allowed in the basket.
6. Do not climb, stand, or sit on the basket railings.
7. Do not lean ladders against the lift. Never apply a side load force to the unit by pushing or pulling from the basket or by hanging heavy wires or cables over the side.
8. Do not operate near overhead electrical lines or obstructions.

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9. Do not stand under or near the loaded basket.
10. After use, return the lift to its storage area, and plug the lift into the wall.

J. Lighting Equipment, Hazards and Safe Working Practices

The use of stage lighting equipment in the theater poses the risk of electrical shock and burns from coming into contact with hot metal and glass. Do not use or handle any lighting equipment without proper training and authorization.

1. The rigging of lighting equipment is only to be done under Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator supervision.
2. Wear proper gloves when handling hot lighting equipment and changing lamps.
3. All electrical, ladder, lift, and rigging rules apply while you are working with lighting equipment.
4. Return unused gel, cable, lights, and accessories to proper storage areas when work is complete.
5. Clean up electrical equipment and accessories from stage and storage.
6. Report any damaged equipment to supervisor, tag it, and remove it from service.
7. Unplug lighting instruments before changing lamps.
8. Safety cables are required on all stage lighting equipment and accessories.

K. Noise Levels, Hazards and Safe Working Practices

Loud noise levels are present both in the shop and on stage. The noises come from machine tools as well as theatre sound systems. Prolonged exposure to loud and continuous levels of noise can severely damage or impair one's hearing.

1. Ear protection is made available, and everyone is encouraged to make use of it when using power tools or in other load situations.

L. Obstructions, Hazards and Safe Working Practices

Many obstructions are present in the shop and theater work areas. These hazards include, but are not limited to, overhead wires, cables and scenery, flexible work area, temporary storage of scenery, materials and settings, and various floor obstructions as stated above. Extreme caution should be used in all areas.

1. Be aware of changes in working areas.
2. Use caution when moving objects in, around, and out of the stage and shop areas.
3. Clean up and properly store all tools, materials, and scenery when finished with a project.
4. Mark off and alert others of temporary obstructions.
5. Do not block aisles, hallways, fire exits, doorways, fire doors, fire equipment, or electrical panels.
6. Notify the Technical Director or Auditorium Coordinator of any unsafe conditions immediately.

M. Overhead Work Areas, Hazards and Safe Working Practices

There are many overhead work areas in the theater environment including areas in and around the shop, on stage, and in the auditorium. These areas include ladders, lifts, platforms, catwalks, and loading rail. There is always a chance that something or someone may fall from an overhead work area. Be cautious when working overhead as well as below.

1. Sound off when working overhead.
2. Hard hats are required below when any work is being done from above involving rigging or the genie lift.
3. Secure all tools and equipment when working overhead.
4. Stay inside catwalks and railings when working overhead.
5. Sound off if something is dropped when working overhead.
6. If one does not feel safe working at heights, the Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator should be informed and that person should not continue working that job.
7. Do not drop objects from any height over four feet; lower them down with a rope.
8. Empty unsecured objects from pockets before climbing to grid or catwalk.
9. Do not look up if someone sounds off. A hard hat will not protect one's face or teeth.
10. Use safety lines at all times when working in unprotected areas.
11. When changing weight at a loading gallery above the stage floor, the floor must be cleared to the proscenium opening. A floor monitor must be present at all times to ensure the area below remains clear.
12. Do not leave unsecured tools or materials unattended in overhead work areas.

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N. **Painting, Hazards and Safe Working Practices**

Most paints in the scene shop are non toxic acrylic, or latex water-based paints.

However, spray paints and enamels are sometimes used. These paints can create health, as well as safety hazards. Caution should be used when spraying any type of paint.

1. All spray paint (cans) should be used in well ventilated areas.
2. Clean up paint spills immediately.
3. Clean up buckets, brushes, and rollers when finished painting.
4. Mark and block access to wet painted floor areas.

O. **Pneumatic Tools, Hazards and Safe Working Practices**

Pneumatic tools run from compressed air. Safe use and thorough knowledge of these tools is required before use. Training should be conducted by the Technical Director or other approved supervisor.

1. Eye protection is required when using any pneumatic tool or nozzle.
2. Never point a pneumatic tool toward oneself or another person.
3. Never carry a pneumatic tool by the hose.
4. Disconnect the tool when hot in use or while loading or unloading staples or paint.
5. Inspect the tools and hose before use.
6. Report any damaged tool to supervisor, label the tool, and remove it from service.
7. Do not disable the safety mechanism on any pneumatic staple gun.

P. **Power Tools, Hazards and Safe Working Practices**

Power tools include large permanent machine tools as well as portable power tools. These tools can be dangerous as they have electrically operated blades and cutters. Extreme caution should be used when operating and making adjustments to these tools. Safety training for a power tool must be completed through the Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator before use.

1. Students are not required to operate power tools.
2. Never carry a portable power tool by the cord.
3. Never yank the cord from an outlet. Disconnect it by pulling out the plug.
4. Keep cords away from heat, oil, water, and sharp edges.
5. Never handle or operate tools with wet, oily, or dirty hands.
6. Keep cords, hands, and clothing away from moving parts of the tool (i.e., blades, bits, and cutters).
7. Disconnect tools when not in use, before servicing, and before changing bits, blades, and cutters.

8. To avoid accidental starting, do not hold finger on the switch while carrying a plugged in tool.
9. Inspect tools and cords for damage and defects before each use.
10. Do not use a damaged tool or cord. Label it and remove it from service by turning it in to the supervisor. Do not attempt to repair it.
11. Do not remove, alter, or disable any guard or safety device on any power tool.
12. Workers must wear eye protection when using any power tools. Safety glasses will be supplied, but students are encouraged to have their own personal pair of safety glasses.
13. Wear appropriate ear protection when using power tools.
14. All operators of power tools must be trained in proper use and safety of the tool prior to operating it.
15. Allow the tool to reach full speed before use. Stay with it until it stops. Do not leave a running machine unattended.
16. Do not restart power tools until they have come to a complete stop.
17. Inspect materials before use. Remove screws, nails, staples, or other materials before cutting into used woods.
18. Make any necessary adjustments to power tools with the power turned off.
19. All special setups must be checked by the Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator before power is turned on.
20. Stand to the side of the power tool when turning it on. Do not stand directly in line with the saw blade or other moving device.
21. Observe safety space. Only the operator is permitted within the working area around a machine.
22. Keep the power tool and related work area clean and free of debris.

Q. **Rigging, Hazards and Safe Working Practices**

Rigging and running scenery for stage use can be a dangerous task if not trained in the safe operation of the rigging system. All persons using or conducting other activities around or near any of the stage rigging systems must first be trained in safe use and operation. There are many hazards that can cause serious injury and damage. Weights are loaded above, scenery is constantly moving in or out, and obstructions and weight limits are always present.

1. Do not use the rigging system without proper training from the Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator.
2. Students may only operate the rigging system while battens are being loaded or unloaded under direct supervision of the technical director.
3. Rigging battens shall be padlocked when not being used and at the end of a rehearsal or work session.

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4. The electric raceways may only be moved or repositioned to a different batten by an outside rigging company.
5. The rigging system shall undergo a full safety check up by an outside company every 5 years.
6. Do not operate the rigging system without a spotter present if vision is obstructed.
7. Be sure the load is properly balanced.
8. Do not leave a line set while it is unlocked.
9. The attachment of scenery to batten shall be done under the supervisor the Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator.
10. Changing weights shall be done under the supervision of the Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator.
11. When changing weight at a loading gallery above the stage floor, the floor must be cleared to the proscenium opening. A floor monitor must be present at all times to ensure the area below remains clear. Sound off when starting and when finished.
12. When loading a batten, always load the batten first, the arbor second.
13. When unloading a batten, always unload the arbor first, the batten second.
14. Sound off when moving a line set in or out.
15. Do not move a line set without warning persons working on the loading gallery.
16. If a line set runs away and is too heavy to safely stop, warn all present and take cover.
17. The locking rail should be labeled with what is on each line set and what line set is not to move.
18. Test all running lines before each show.
19. In a performance situation, only move lines on cue. Moving a line set before a cue could cause severe injury or damage to persons and property on stage.
20. Observe all spike marks.
21. If you are unsure about any aspect of the rigging system, ask.

- This list of hazards and safe working practices is by no means the limit to which one should be careful. Think safety at all times. If ever in doubt of something, ASK.

- Any worker who thinks that a piece of equipment or an activity is hazardous may refuse to use that equipment or do that activity.

- Report any hazardous equipment to the Technical Director / Auditorium Coordinator.

- A safe and productive theater environment is our main concern.

I have read the Central York High School Stage and Auditorium Safety document and understand that Safety and Productivity is our main concern.

student signature

date

parent signature

date