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Use of Live Fire During a Performance

References: 2022 Oregon Fire Code, Sections 105.5.36 and 308.1

1. Purpose

To provide guidelines for performance artists who use live fire as a feature of their show. The following safety considerations and practices are consistent with fire and life safety codes and public assembly safety concerns addressed through a permit process.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all acts of using live fire in a performance event occurring within all areas in which Gresham Fire Department (GFD) provides service. This includes performances or demonstrations of fire breathing, fire juggling, etc. Special effect pyrotechnics are not included as they are addressed under a separate permit.

3. Definition

A live fire performance shall be defined as any act (fire juggling, fire eating, fire dancing, etc.), in a public or private place, that utilizes live fire for entertainment purposes, or in ways in which fire travels through the air (by one person or between multiple persons). These acts do not include pyrotechnics otherwise regulated under a separate permit.

4. Procedures

The following information is provided for use by live fire performance artists. Failure to follow these procedures may endanger the public and/or the artist.

I. **Space Considerations:** A 10-foot distance should be maintained between the fire-involved item and any member of the audience, any combustible decoration, and any combustible item within the immediate performance area. A minimum 10-foot ceiling height is also required and decorative materials shall be flame resistive or treated with a fire retardant.

II. **Room and Stage Requirements:** The room and performance area are *required to be protected by an automatic fire sprinkler system*. A floor plan shall be provided showing the dimensions of the performance area, seating and equipment layout of the room, dimensions of the room(s), aisles and locations of the exits.

III. Extinguishing Agents:

A. A minimum of one 2A-10BC classification fire extinguisher shall be required for each performance to combat any flammable or combustible liquid fires. The Fire Official may require additional extinguishers, dependent upon the circumstances of the performance and occupancy.

B. One designated towel wetted with water for each active fire performer shall be provided to extinguish the fire implement. The towel should be sufficiently-sized and identified by color or marking or kept in a labeled container to differentiate its use from other towels that might be used to mop up flammable or combustible liquid spills. Towels for mopping up flammable or combustible liquids should be stored in a metal container with a tight fitting lid.

IV. Personal Safety:

A. One 5-gallon open-topped bucket of water shall be provided for each fire performance area. The intent is for use to cool burns to performers or audience members. The Fire Official may require additional water buckets, depending upon the circumstances of the performance and occupancy.

B. One trained spotter is to be provided for each performance. The spotter shall be positioned between the active performer and the audience. Spotters should be aware of first aid measures for burns and be knowledgeable in the use of, and have ready access to, fire extinguishers and extinguishing agents. The spotter may be a fellow performer who is not currently performing. Additional spotters may be required by GFD for larger performances.

V. Fuels: commonly used fuels include:

-Denatured Alcohol	-Stove Fuel
-Lamp Oil (smokeless/odorless)	-“Shell Sol T” brand fuel
-“Fire Water” brand fuel	-“Allume Feu” brand gel fuel
-Kerosene (recommended for outside use)	

NOTE: Gasoline is prohibited under any circumstance. Stove Fuel may be allowed in either the original container, maximum one (1) gallon on site or in a UL Listed self-closing flammable liquid storage container, maximum one (1) gallon on site. Unused fuels shall be kept in their original container with the cap in place. The container cap shall be secured on the container opening when the container is not in use.

VI. **Wicks:** It is recommended that wick material consist of cotton wrapped in Kevlar (to prevent breakdown of the cotton as it burns). Synthetic materials should be avoided.

VII. **Clothing:** The clothing of performers should be of fire resistant materials such as natural fiber, Nomex, etc.

VIII. **Audience:** It should be recognized that audiences, especially youthful ones, may not fully understand the dangers associated with fire performance art. Every effort should be made to emphasize the safety precautions and dangers of such activity.

IX. **Permit:** Fire Performance Artists must secure a Fire Prevention Permit through GFD. This permit shall include a copy of this policy. The permit and this policy information should be available on site at all performances and shall be presented upon request. Failure to comply with these requirements shall be cause for revocation of the permit.

X. **Inspection:** Owners or their representatives are responsible to conduct a self-inspection of the facility, equipment, and layout as outlined in items I through VIII above and maintain compliance with the requirements during the practice and performance. An inspection may be conducted by GFD to verify permit compliance. If there is evidence a self-inspection was not performed and compliance was not maintained, GFD may prohibit similar performances in the future.