
THEATRE SAFETY
General Rules

- Know the location and operation of all fire extinguishers, first aid kit, and fire alarms. (Know what to do if the sprinklers go off).
- When you hear “Heads Up!” – move out of the way.
- Do not “fly” anything in or out without a “Heads Up” warning.
- When using a tool while working on the grid or above the stage floor at any level, attach the tool to a safety line on your belt so it will not fall to the floor.
- Do not work with the rigging lines if you have not been trained to do so.
- Remove all nails, screws or any protrusions in boards, and sweep stage area often!
- Do not smoke, eat, or drink in the auditorium, on-stage or backstage areas, shop, booth, dressing rooms, costume and prop storage areas, etc.
- Keep all areas clean! (Dressing areas, on-stage, backstage, restrooms, shops, performance areas, and other work/storage areas).
- Keep personal items outside the performance facility.
- All tools, materials, props, and sound equipment must be put away (locked) at all times when not in use during supervised construction or production periods.
- Be careful of the orchestra pit as it is not always covered.
• A three (3) foot path must be kept clear in the props room at all times.
• Nothing is to be stored on the grid.
• Report any damaged or defective equipment immediately.
• Any loose and flexible cable must be secured to the floor (particularly in any traffic areas).
• Wear heat-resistant gloves when working with lighting instruments.
• All lighting instruments in use must have safety cables attached.
• Coil and properly store all cables/electrical cords when not in use.
TOOL SAFETY AND USAGE

The following rules apply for all tools:

1. Watch what you are doing.
2. Do not talk to anyone or allow yourself to become distracted when operating the tool.
3. Safety glasses and ear protection should be worn at all times.
4. Do not use a tool that you are unfamiliar with. Get training from the Theatre Teacher.
5. Make sure the tool is clear of the material before turning it on. When you turn on the tool, let it come up to full speed before making a cut.
6. After you are finished with a tool, turn it off. Stay with the tool until it comes to a complete stop. Never walk away while a tool is still running.
7. When finished with a tool, clear away all debris from it and return it to its original settings so the next person can use it safely.
8. If material becomes jammed in the tool, do not release it. Hold it in place and turn off the tool. Wait until the tool comes to a complete stop before attempting to remove the jammed material.
9. Don’t operate the tool when you, or the electrical cord, is in contact with water or something that is damp.
10. Be sure your work is properly supported so that the blade or bit won’t bind (become stuck).
11. Before cutting, be sure the path of the intended cut is clear so that the blade or bit won’t cut sawhorses, extension cords, nails, etc.
12. Always get instructions before operating any power or hand tool. Be sure you know what you’re doing before you do it.
13. Pay attention to what you are doing. Don’t operate any tool unless you are giving it your undivided attention. Watch your work area for potential hazards such as wood with protruding nails and potential fire or electrical...
hazards. Either correct the hazard (if you know how) or report it.

**TABLE SAW**

1. The table saw is primarily used for rip cuts. Crosscuts should not be done on this tool unless under the supervision of an adult or if given specific instructions to do so.
2. The kickback guard should remain on the saw and in use at all times.
3. Never use the rip fence and the miter gauge together to make a cut.
4. If your hand comes within three (3) inches of the blade during a cut, USE a push stick.
5. The blade of the saw should never rise more than one tooth height above the wood to be cut.
6. If ripping material is longer than four (4) feet, you should get an assistant to help you.
7. When two people are making a cut, the person in front of the saw is in control at all times. The helper should just support the material and NEVER push or pull.

**POWERED MITER SAW (CHOP SAW)**

1. The chop saw is used exclusively for crosscuts.
2. When making a cut, align the blade with your mark BEFORE you turn on the saw.
3. Make sure that the material is firmly against the fence before you begin cutting.
4. When cutting, lower the saw slowly through the wood and let it rise completely out of the wood before turning off the saw.
DRILL PRESS

1. The drill press is used to drill holes in both wood and steel.
2. The drill press can use both paddle bits and twist bits. NEVER use an auger bit.
3. Always clamp the material firmly to the tool bed before drilling.
4. If drilling holes in a long piece of material, place the overhanging portion of the material to your LEFT while facing the drill press. This ensures that if the drill binds in the material, that the material will swing away from your body.
5. When drilling steel you MUST use a twist bit and you MUST oil the holes as you drill. This cools the steel and the bit as well as keeping the bit sharp.

SANDER

1. If you are to be doing a large amount of sanding you should wear a particle (dust) mask.
2. Be careful not to get fingers too close to a moving sandpaper pad. The pad can remove skin and bones much quicker than wood or steel.
3. If the sandpaper pad looks damaged, replace the sandpaper.
4. If you are to be sanding for a period of time greater than 15 minutes, take 5 minute breaks from the sanding every 15 minutes to keep from permanently damaging the nerves in your hands, wrists and arms.
COUNTER WEIGHT SYSTEMS

1. Make sure that everybody clears the stage area under the loading platform when counterweights are being loaded onto, or unloaded from the arbor.
2. Don’t stack counterweights above the lip of the loading platform or anywhere where they might be knocked off of the platform.
3. When working on the grid, loading platform or pin (fly) rail, do not carry anything in your pockets other than the tools you are going to use. Extra tools, pencils, or keys might fall on someone, causing serious injury.
4. Inspect all flying hardware, and replace or repair any defective equipment.
5. Bolt in place the hardware supporting all flown units. Nails or screws can pull out of the wood.
6. Always attach the scenery to the batten first, and then load the counterweights.
7. When removing (striking) flown scenery, always unload the counterweights first, and then remove the scenery from the batten.
8. Any unit other than a very light flat should be flown under compression. This means that the lines supporting the piece are attached to the bottom of the unit rather than the top.
9. When loading or unloading an arbor, be sure you are only doing so from the loading platform.

PAINT SHOP

1. Always close or cover paint when it is being stored. If covering for the night, be sure to add a ½ cup of water to the paint but DO NOT MIX.
2. Be sure to thoroughly wash out all brushes and rollers and hang them up to dry when finished painting.
3. Be sure to wash out all paint bins (trays, cups, bowls, etc).
4. Keep your workspace clean.
5. If working with non-water based paints, be sure to work in a well ventilated area and wear the appropriate mask.

**ELECTRICAL HAZARDS**

1. If you don’t know what you’re doing, DON’T DO IT. Ask your supervisor, or consult a trained electrician.
2. Use tools that are covered with plastic or rubber insulation when working with electricity.
3. Use wooden or fiberglass ladders when working on elevated electrical jobs. Electricity will always take the path of least resistance and a metal ladder (and your body) provides a very low-resistant path. Movable metal scaffolds or adjustable ladders should have lockable rubber casters.
4. Disconnect any device (lighting, instrument, motor, and amplifier) from the circuit before you work on it. Unplug any lighting instruments before changing the lamp.
5. Use common sense: Don’t touch any bare wires. Don’t work in damp locations or put a drink where it could spill on an electrical or electronic component. Don’t intentionally overload a circuit. Don’t try to bypass fuses or circuit breakers.
6. Maintain the integrity of all ground circuits. Don’t clip the ground plug off any extension cord or power cord. When necessary, use ground-plug adapters.
7. Check cables and connectors periodically, and replace any items that show signs of cracking, chipping, or other deterioration. Cracks in the insulation of cables and connectors increase the chances of receiving a shock from the device.
8. Keep the cables and connectors clean. Remove any corrosion, paint, grease, dust, or other accumulations as soon as they become evident. These substances can act as insulation between the contacts of the connector, and if flammable, they can pose a fire hazard.

9. When stage or microphone cables are not in use, coil them and hang them up. A cable will stay neatly coiled if the connectors are plugged together or if it is tied with light rope or fastened with a Velcro loop.

10. Always disconnect a plug by pulling on the body of the connector, not the cable. Pulling on the cable puts an unnecessary strain on the cable and will eventually defeat the clamp. When the cable clamp no longer functions, pulling on the cable places the strain directly on the electrical connections.

11. Be sure that all elements of a cable are of the same electrical rating: twelve-gauge cable (capable of carrying twenty amperes of current) should have only twenty-ampere-rated connectors.
It shall be the policy of FISD that a safe, healthy environment shall be maintained at all times within the Theatre Programs and its environments, including performance spaces, rehearsal spaces, and shops and other work spaces. This includes controlling and minimizing hazards attendant with the creation of theatre. We recognize that many processes, techniques, materials, and practices used in the theatre contain an inherent risk to individuals; if those risks cannot be adequately minimized and controlled through proper training, equipment, and use of appropriate precautions, THOSE THINGS MAY NOT BE USED WITHIN OUR PROGRAMS.

Furthermore, ignoring precautions and restrictions shall not be allowed. No production can ever be considered justification for risk to any member of our program, and no production can be considered successful if someone is injured in its completion.

No activity in theatre is completely safe. Safety procedures considered standard in any other industry may not be practical in a performance situation. We must therefore be especially diligent in following safety rules that do apply. FAILURE TO FOLLOW APPROPRIATE SAFETY RULES AND POLICIES MAY RESULT IN SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH! Therefore, failure to follow required safety rules may result in immediate, temporary and possibly permanent expulsion from a given activity, production, or class.

Handling Safety Issues

It is the FISD’s policy that no safety concern is unimportant. All students within the Department are encouraged to bring such concerns to the attention of their
Technical Director. In no way will doing so reflect badly on, or be held against the person making the report. Rather, contributing to the health and safety of everyone is yours and my responsibility.

**General Rules for Safe Practices**

1. **THINK THINK THINK:** Anticipate what could happen and be prepared for potential problems.

2. **ASK FOR HELP:** If you don’t know how to do it – STOP and ask the supervisor for help.

3. **UNCOMFORTABLE? DON’T DO IT:** If you are uncomfortable doing something, that’s when accidents occur. Ask someone else to complete the job.

4. **CLEAN UP:** Keep the work area clean of extra tools, supplies, electrical cords, sawdust, etc., to minimize the dangers of slipping, tripping, or hurting yourself or someone else.

5. **WEAR APPROPRIATE SHOP CLOTHING:** Avoid wearing loose clothing, loose long and dangling hair, and loose jewelry when working with any power tools.

6. **EYE PROTECTION:** When working with tools creating sawdust or other small particles, make sure and wear eye protection!
7. SAFETY GUARDS, USE THEM: Tools have safety guards for a reason … your protection.

8. EAR PROTECTION: Tools can be loud at times, take precaution and pop some ear plugs in!!! Three tools in a shop require the use of ear plugs. Pneumatic staple gun, radial arm saw and router.

9. TOO HEAVY? GET HELP: FISD requires any object weighing over 35 pounds to be lifted in a team of two or more.

10. RIGHT TOOL RIGHT JOB: When working with equipment, use the appropriate tool for the given job. Use a hammer on a nail not on a C-Wrench.

11. ACCIDENTS HAPPEN: Report any accidents, even minor ones, to the supervisor.

12. NO HORSEPLAY: The Scene Shop is not full of toys. It should be respected that items can harm you. Take care in the Scene Shop.
RESTRICTED ACCESS

A theatre space, especially the stage area, is essentially a large machine for producing plays; it contains many hazards, especially to those unfamiliar with the mechanical and physical aspects of a theatre.

THEREFORE:

No unauthorized personnel (i.e. anyone other than cast and crew) shall be allowed backstage during any performance, between call time and 15 minutes after final curtain.

No one is allowed access to the cat walks unless supervisory personnel are present and have given permission.

No one shall be permitted to work alone in the Theatre space. *

In case of injury or incident, there must be another person present to render aid or seek assistance.

NO ONE SHALL BE PERMITTED TO OPERATE ANY POWER TOOLS IN THE SHOP SPACES UNLESS A THEATRE TECH INSTRUCTOR IS PRESENT, OR HAS APPROVED IT.

First Aid, Accidents and Reporting

A First Aid Kit (intended for First Aid ONLY) is maintained and stocked by the Theatre Tech Instructor.
All incidents must also be reported to your Technical Theatre Teacher immediately and logged in the First Aid Binder (even a band-aid).
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

FOR ANY EMERGENCY, INCLUDING INJURY, ILLNESS, FIRE OR EXPLOSION, CALL 911 ON THE ROOM PHONE.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

1. Never move a person suspected of serious injury unless it is a life-threatening situation such as a fire. Attempts to move an injured person can cause further injury, especially to the spine and neck. Try to keep the injured person warm and still.

FIRE EMERGENCIES

In the event of a fire, begin by dialing 911.

1. Activate the fire alarm.

2. Put out the fire if you know how to do so without endangering yourself or others.
You are not required to fight fires. Those that choose to fight small incipient stage fires (no larger than a waste paper basket) must locate a fire extinguisher. If a fire cannot be extinguished within the first 10 seconds, leave immediately!

3. If the fire is large or spreading, leave the area and prevent the fire's spread by closing the doors behind you. If on stage, activate the Fire Curtain by pulling the lever on the curtain release behind either side of the proscenium.
4. Evacuate the building and await the arrival of Fire Officials. Try to account for everyone inside the building. Do not leave the area until you have been accounted for.

5. Do not re-enter the building until you are told do so by the Fire Officials.

CHEMICAL EXPOSURE

1. If you spill a chemical such as paint thinners or fabric dyes on your skin:
   • Rinse the area with water for at least 15 minutes.
   • Remove any soiled clothing and jewelry while you are rinsing.

2. If you get chemical in your eyes:
   • Rinse with water for at least 15 minutes, rinsing from the nose outward to avoid contaminating the unaffected eye.
   • Remove contact lenses while rinsing and don’t wait to remove them before you rinse.

3. If you inhale a chemical or are overcome by fumes:
   • Leave the room and move to fresh air.
   • Keep door of room open to vent.
   • Do not re-enter a contaminated area.
   • If symptoms do not subside, seek medical attention.
CHEMICAL SPILLS

The general procedure in the event of a spill is to notify the Theatre Tech Instructor.

FIRE CONTROL AND USE

Fire is a hazard in the Theatre. To minimize this problem, the following shall be adhered to at all times:

FISD theatres are equipped with a Fire Curtain, which is designed to lower automatically in case of a fire. **At no time is the path of the Fire Curtain to be blocked by scenery, props, or rehearsal props or furniture.**

All technical personnel and students MUST, and all actors SHOULD, be trained in the location and use of fire extinguishers in the backstage areas. HOWEVER, if a fire cannot be extinguished within the first 10 seconds, **GETTING EVERYONE OUT SAFELY IS THE FIRST PRIORITY!** This is the responsibility of the Production Stage Manager and the Technical Director. Activate the fire alarm immediately! If possible, the Fire Curtain lowering system (i.e. the “lever” box) should be activated before leaving the stage. Fire alarm boxes are strategically located at each building. Pull the alarm switch to alert the Fire Department on the way out if it has not already been activated.

Open Flames:
Open flames are a great “unpredictable” special effect used to heighten a performance onstage. At no time within FISD will open flames be used.

COMBAT AND WEAPONS

ACTORS and DIRECTORS:
No stage combat shall be permitted in production or class without training and approval of the Theatre faculty responsible and/or the faculty Fight Director.

PROPS

Prop weapons at NOT toys. They are NOT to be handled EXCEPT by authorized persons and are the responsibility of the Props Master of each production and/or the assigned Weapons Handler. NO ONE ELSE IS ALLOWED TO HANDLE ANY PROPR WEAPON!

Prop weapons shall be secured when not in use, and shall be issued to the actors using them only when required, and when finished, shall be immediately turned back in to the props person responsible, who will immediately secure them until the next performance.

All prop weapons MUST ALWAYS BE TREATED AS REAL weapons (which in fact they are). All guns used as props must be handled as if loaded; all edged weapons must be treated as sharp. EVEN BATED (blanks, automatic machine rigged). WEAPONS CAN KILL!

SMOKING RULE
It is State Law that **SMOKING IS PROHIBITED** in all school buildings, including the Theatre facilities; in fact, it is illegal within school boundaries. No performances will require actors to smoke onstage.

**Smoking Complaints and Hazards**

Any perceived safety concerns or hazards, large or small, MUST be reported to the supervisor in charge of the area, and/or the Technical Director, who shall take steps to correct the problem or to report the problem to the appropriate authorities for action.

**SCENE SHOP SAFETY RULES**

1. All persons working in the shops shall be properly attired. Closed toe shoes, fitted clothing (not baggy) coverall recommended, bandana/hair tie, and work gloves.

2. The Scene Shop is an eye protection area and safety glasses are required upon immediate entry.

3. Keep the shop clean.

4. Do not hide damaged tools. Tell the Theatre Technical Instructor immediately.

5. At no time shall any student operate or attempt to operate any of the following pieces of equipment without permission from the Theatre Technical Instructor.
   a) Table Saw
   b) Radial Arm Saw
   c) Circular Saw
d) Band Saw  

e) Miter Saw  

F) Pneumatic Tools  

g) Spray paint  

6. Check the tools work area. If it’s clear you can use it.  

7. Turn machines off and unplug them when they are not in use.  

8. IF YOU DON’T KNOW – ASK!  

There is no such thing as a dumb question, only dumb mistakes and injuries.  

SAFETY NOTICES AND BULLETINS  

Safety Bulletins and Notices will be posted on the bulletin boards in the shops.  

Safety rules for each of the major power tools in the Scene Shops will be posted above or near each tool. NO PERSONS WILL BE ALLOWED TO OPERATE ANY POWER TOOL UNTIL TRAINED AND APPROVED BY THE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR. Likewise, personnel and students must be trained and approved before being permitted to operate any powered sewing equipment. All required safety rules must be followed at all times.  

Some guidelines for using tools include:  

Inspect tools before use for any defects such as frayed wires, or damaged hand tools. Remove defective tools from service and have repaired or replaced.
Only use power tools that are properly grounded with a 3-pronged plug or that are double-insulated. A power tool with a missing grounding prong shall be considered damaged and be removed from use until repaired.

Never carry a power tool by its cord. Avoid wrapping cords too tightly around tools for storage to prevent damage to strain relief grommets.

Unplug power tools before loading them, changing blades or bits, making adjustments, or cleaning them. Follow all manufacturer’s instructions for handling and adjusting.

Defective, damaged or unsafe equipment must be removed immediately from service if damage occurs or is detected.

Dull tools are unsafe and can damage operator or work. Maintain your tools and always use sharp cutting blades.

NEVER ALTER OR REMOVE ANY MACHINE OR BLADE GUARDS OR DISABLE ANY SAFETY FEATURE.

MSDS

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for chemicals and materials used in the shops are maintained by the Technical Director and are available at any time to all persons in the Theatre area. Workers in the shops, students and paid assistants are required to follow safety guidelines on each sheet for each material and chemical. If you do not understand or have questions about anything in any MSDS, or about any process, see the Technical Director for clarification. Schools in the FISD, due to an
approved waiver, are not required to have a MSDS present in the Scene Shop. If you question a chemical or material, ask your Theatre Technical Instructor for details.

**Work Requiring Training**

Many of the processes and systems in the theatre complex pose hazards while in use. Before students and staff are permitted to use them, they must be trained and approved by the appropriate supervisor of the area. These processes include but are not limited to:

Use of power tools in the Scene Shop:
- Table Saw
- Radial Arm Saw
- Band Saw
- Portable Drills and Drill Motors
- Bench and Portable Grinders
- Pneumatic-powered Nailer and Staplers
- Electric and Gas Welders
- Miter/Chop Saw
- Circular Saw

Theatre Systems:
- Lighting Control Boards
- Sound Control Boards

**Personal Protective Equipment**
In addition to normal permitted work clothing (see Scene Shop Safety Rules, Item 1) the shops are provided with personal protective equipment. Use of such equipment is not optional and shall be used at all times when performing associated activities.

Such personal protective equipment shall include but is not limited to:

**EYE PROTECTION:** Safety glasses, goggles, or face shields shall be required when operating power tools.

**EAR PROTECTION:** Ear plugs or ear muffs shall be required when operating louder power tools such as radial arm saw, table saw, circular saw, chop saw, or portable grinder at any time, or any percussive tool (pneumatic nail gun), at ALL times. Ear plugs or ear muffs shall be required when operating ANY power tool for extended periods of time.

**BREATHING PROTECTION:** Spray painting is only permitted in the designated areas with unobstructed air flow into and out of the area, or while wearing a ventilation mask rated for spray paint.

Dust masks are required for activities creating quantities of dust or if dust collection system is not practical for a given activity (i.e. portable tools).
PROTECTIVE GLOVES are required when working with solvents or solvent based (non-water based) chemicals and materials. Extended exposure to water based chemicals (such as paint) shall also require the use of protective gloves. Refer to MSDS for guidelines as to appropriate equipment.

Proper Use of Mechanical Fly System

All operators will call out aloud what is coming in (i.e. “Electric 1 coming in!”)

Everyone on deck will respond “Thank You” unless there is a problem i.e. something in the way, etc., in that case they respond “Hold”.

Clear the area that batten is being lowered to. The operator will only start after hearing “Thank You”, or “Go Ahead” or “Clear” if there was a hold.

DO NOT OVER-WEIGHT A BATTEN

DO NOT HANG ON A BATTEN.

When load is finished the operator will call out aloud what is leaving (i.e. Electric 2 going out!”) – all stand clear.