



# City of Casper Fire-EMS Department

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**Kenneth King**  
Fire Chief

## Haunted House Action Plan

History has proven that while seasonal Haunted House entertainment has been successful it can also be an attraction that, if not planned correctly, can be a serious fire hazard. It is the responsibility of every promoter to ensure that the safety of all involved be addressed and planned for. This Emergency Action plan is provided by the Casper Fire-EMS Department to assist in meeting this important requirement. It is the goal of the Casper Fire-EMS Department to minimize the risk associated with places of assemblies such as Haunted Houses. This guide has been assembled from information obtained through the Haunters Handbook, Safety and Business Practices Manuals provided by the IAHA (International Association of Haunted Attractions).

# Haunted House Employee/Volunteer Standard Operating Procedures Guide

## **Safety / Fire Codes / Security!**

When addressing the issue of safety, enough cannot be said about the importance of this topic. Accidents can and may happen; however, you can do much to decrease the odds of such occurrences. To express our concern for safety, we provided documentation to the Fire Department, and the Building Inspector, including a safety Emergency Action Plan (EAP), our standard operating procedure (SOP) for a safety inspection, a worker's release of liability and damage waiver that is required to be read and signed by all crew members, as well as the house rules which are clearly displayed for patrons visiting the attraction.

## **EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**

**This Emergency Action Plan was developed to be a comprehensive Standard Operating Guide, (SOG). The information used in this SOG was compiled from information found in the Haunter's Handbook, Safety, and Business Practices Manuals provided by the IAHA (International Association of Haunted Attractions) and Kelly Allen of Eureka Screams TM.**

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### **INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE:**

This plan sets forth the policy and procedures to be followed in various types of emergencies. The plan's purpose is to prevent and minimize loss of life, injury, and property damage, which may result from emergency situations.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

"Haunted House" shall mean the annual event . "Staff" shall mean the persons constructing, operating, performing in, or otherwise supporting the haunted house production, and includes volunteer/employees.

"Visitors" shall mean members of the general public attending the haunted house.

"Building" or "Facility" shall mean the space located and utilized for a purpose or producing the haunted house amusement event. "Fire Department" shall mean the Casper Fire-EMS Department. "Police Department" shall mean the Casper Police Department.

## **STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Box Office Manager**

For each public performance, an Employee or Adult Volunteer shall be designated to serve as Box Office Manager. In the event of a fire or other emergency requiring outside assistance, the House Manager or Safety/Security Staff will notify (in person or by radio) the Box Office Manager, who will then call for such assistance.

### **House Manager**

For each public performance, an Employee or Adult Volunteer shall be designated to serve as House Manager. The House Manager shall be present on the premises for the duration of the time the haunted house is open to the public. If the House Manager must leave the premises (even for a brief period), he/she shall delegate responsibilities to another Employee or another Adult Volunteer. The House Manager shall have overall responsibilities for the safe operation of the House and for the implementation of the Emergency Action Plan.

### **Safety/Security Staff**

For each public performance, Employees and Adult Volunteers shall be designated as Safety/Security Staff. Safety/Security Staff shall conduct frequent safety inspections of the public and non-public areas of the facility. Unsafe conditions (fire hazards, electrical hazards, tripping hazards, etc.) shall be corrected immediately, if possible, or reported to the House Manager. Safety/Security Staff members may be equipped with two-way radios.  
(Recommended)

## **COMMUNICATIONS:**

At all times when the Haunted House is open to the public, the following Staff shall remain in contact, via two-way radios or face to face:

- -House Manager
- -Box Office Manager
- -Safety/Security Staff

Emergency instructions and announcements shall be made by word of mouth or PA system.

### **Lighting/Sound Technician**

For each public performance, an Employee shall be designated to serve as the Lighting/Sound Technician. In the event of an emergency requiring an evacuation and as directed by the House Manager or Safety/Security Staff, the Lighting/Sound Technician shall:

- Turn ON house lights
- Turn OFF all house music and sound effects
- Turn OFF all scene lighting and power
- Make Announcements over PA system

### **Staff and Volunteers**

All Haunted House Staff shall take responsibility for their own safety and for the safety of those in their immediate vicinity. Observations of unsafe conditions shall be immediately brought to the attention of the Safety/Security Staff or other responsible persons. Staff shall familiarize themselves with the Haunted House layout, exits and emergency corridors, and the path to primary and alternate exits from the particular location in which they are working.

### **Portable Fire Extinguishers**

The House shall be equipped with at least one multi-purpose dry chemical fire extinguisher per emergency exit. House Staff shall be instructed that the portable fire extinguishers have been placed for use by trained individuals. Staff shall not be permitted to use the portable fire extinguishers unless they have been trained to do so

### **Emergency Exits & Means of Egress**

The staff will insure that all exits are unobstructed at all times and be trained as to the closest exit available. The Haunted House set (walls, scenes, mazes, etc.) shall be designed and constructed in such a way to ensure that each point along the public pathway through the House has an accessible route to the primary exits. Each point along the public pathway shall also access at least one other alternate exit.

### **Emergency Lighting System**

The building has a back-up battery-powered emergency lighting system, which will activate in the event of a total power failure. Proper functioning of the system shall be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the FD prior to first opening of the House to the public.

## **FIRE PREVENTION PLAN:**

Emergency Exits & Means of Egress, cont.

The building emergency exit signage shall be supplemented with Glow in the dark exit and directional signage to clearly identify corridor access to the emergency exits. At no time shall access to the building exits be obstructed by construction, props, or stored materials. Pathways to the exits shall be unobstructed and free from tripping hazards.

### **Electrical Hazards**

All electrical equipment, lighting fixtures, extension cords, outlet strips, motors, display devices, and accessories, operating at 120 VAC or greater, shall be UL approved and inspected prior to use. Electrical cords and extension cords which are worn or frayed, have cut or pinched insulation, or exposed conductors, or which have three-pronged plugs with removed or faulty ground prongs, shall not be used. All electrical equipment and cords shall be inspected prior to use, and shall be re-inspected periodically. Damaged or otherwise unsafe electrical equipment shall be tagged and removed from service to be repaired or discarded. Temporary power for lighting and powering displays and accessories shall be supplied as follows:

Power will be supplied to corridors and scene rooms by means of grounded extension cords with molded plugs and fused outlet strips with three-prong grounded receptacles. Care shall be taken to distribute the load to several building circuits.

The appropriate sized extension cords shall be routed along the top of the eight-foot high House partitions and shall be secured by non-conductive means.

Connections to a outlet or outlet strip may be by means of the electrical devices cord or by an extension cord (2 or 3 wire, as appropriate).

The electrical system and lighting shall be designed in such a way so as to minimize the device-to-outlet distance (preferably less than 6 feet).

At no time shall any 120 VAC or greater electrical cord be run behind or under any rugs, fabric, decorations or other highly combustible materials in such a manner that the cord may be damaged, pinched, or abraded by contact with persons or objects.

### **Combustible Materials**

Combustible waste materials shall not be allowed to accumulate in the building. During construction and operation, trash shall be removed and placed in the dumpster daily.

Combustible scenery, props, and decorations shall be appropriately treated with fire retardant materials and maintained out-of-reach of visitors as they pass through the House. Combustibility shall be a consideration of the selection of props and decorating materials. All wall partitions, wood, and fabric shall be treated with an appropriate fire retardant. All foam sculptures shall be either treated or covered with a non-flammable seal coat (i.e., hydrocal). Material Safety Data Sheets will be kept in the Manager's Office.

### **Smoking**

Smoking shall be prohibited inside the House at all times. All visitors will be prohibited from bringing smoking paraphernalia into the building.

## **FIRE EMERGENCY PLAN**

In the event of a fire:

- Staff members discovering a fire or smoke shall immediately activate the nearest alarm pull box or notify Safety/Security Staff.
- Upon sound of the fire alarm, or as instructed by the House Manager, the Lighting & Sound techs shall turn on the house lights, turn off scene and lighting power, turn off music and sound effects, and make announcements over the public address system as instructed.
- All Staff and Visitors shall evacuate the building via primary exit for their location.
- If the primary exit is blocked or unsafe, proceed to the nearest alternate exit.
- If smoke makes it difficult to breathe or see, get on your hands and knees and crawl to the nearest exit.
- Once out of the building, proceed to the nearest designated assembly area (whichever exit you go out of) and await further instructions.
- Staff and Visitor shall not re-enter the building until the "all clear" is given by the Casper Fire-EMS Department.

### **WEATHER EMERGENCY PLAN**

In the event of a tornado warning, or if a tornado is sighted:

- The House Manager shall order an evacuation to the designated places of refuge.
- All building occupants shall remain in the designated place of refuge until the "all clear" is given by the House Manager.

### **MEDICAL EMERGENCY PLAN**

In the event of a medical emergency:

- Staff discovering a medical emergency shall immediately notify the House Manager or Safety/Security Staff.
- House Manager shall instruct the Box Office Manager to call for assistance.
- Persons unconscious or seriously injured should not be removed or repositioned.
- Injured or ill persons who are ambulatory should be assisted to the front door to wait for outside assistance.

### **POWER FAILURE EMERGENCY PLAN**

In the event of a power failure:

- The emergency lighting system will activate in the event of a total power failure and the house will be evacuated.
- The House Manager and Safety/Security Staff shall circulate through the House and ensure the visitors have evacuated the house.

## **BOMB THREAT EMERGENCY PLAN**

In the event that a bomb threat is received:

- Any Staff member receiving a bomb threat shall immediately notify the House Manager. Staff members shall not exercise judgments regarding the validity of any such threat.
- Upon notification of a bomb threat, the House Manager shall instruct the Box Office Manager to inform the Casper Fire-EMS Department and Casper Police Department (911) and immediately initiate an evacuation of the building.
- Clearance to reoccupy the building shall be obtained from the Casper Fire-EMS Department and/or the Casper Police Department.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY PROCEDURE**

If possible to do so safely, the House Manager or Safety/Security Staff shall retrieve the cast assignment board which will be taken to the outside assembly area and used to account for each staff member present in the building. The House Manager shall inform the Casper Fire-EMS Incident Commander of any Staff or Visitors not accounted for.

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## **EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN TRAINING:**

All Haunted House Staff shall be trained on the contents of this Emergency Action Plan. Prior to each performance, just before admitting the public, the House Manager and Safety/Security Staff shall circulate through the House and ensure that staff is familiar with the means of egress from the particular location in which they are working. Each Staff member will receive a copy of the Emergency Action Plan and will have to sign a statement confirming that they personally received a copy of it.

## **HAUNTED HOUSE SAFETY INSPECTION**

Staff will perform a safety inspection every night one-hour before opening, again halfway through the night (plus this gives the workers a little break), and one more one-hour after we close. The following listed items will be checked:

- 1. Floors clear of snags and trip hazards
- 2. Walls clear of snags and sharp objects
- 3. Fire extinguishers clearly marked
- 4. Wires and switches out of reach and hidden
- 5. AC outlets covered
- 6. All lighting and effects properly working
- 7. Exits clearly marked and visible
- 8. Flammable materials located off site
- 9. Exterior lights working
- 10. Condition of masks, costumes
- 11. Plug-in and turn on all fog machines and lighting prior to opening
- 12. Turn-off and unplug all fog machines and lighting before closing
- 13. Pick-up litter around the house
- 14. Take out all garbage
- 15. Check battery life on 2-way radios
- 16. Put juice in fog machines
- 17. Concession stand stocked
- 18. Coffee pot started prior to opening and off prior to closing
- 19. Check flashlights for operability
- 20. Fill gas tank on generator (if you use one or for back-up)
- 21. Main power off at end of night
- 22. Sound systems and effects working properly
- 23. Check for hot spots (one-hour after closing)
- 24. Lock and close all doors, windows

*By Kelly Allen of Eureka Screams™.  
Freely donated to the Haunted Attraction Industry*

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WDH





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Fire Chief

**Haunted House Application**

**Name of Event Sponsor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of Haunted House:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Person:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dates & Times House to be Open:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Specify a Date and Time for the House to be inspected prior to Opening to the Public:**

**Three complete sets of floor plans (scaled drawings) shall be submitted to the Fire Prevention Division a minimum of ten working days prior to the scheduled opening of the haunted house.**

- a. The plans shall detail the route of the haunted house tour and shall also show furnishings, temporary and permanent walls, tunnels, mazes, lighting fixtures, special effects, etc.
- b. The exit routes from within all rooms, tunnels passage ways to a safe discharge on a public way shall be shown on the plans.
- c. An emergency exit shall be provided approximately every 100 feet along the haunted house route. Tour guides shall be familiar with all exits.

**Casper Fire-EMS Department Requirements for Haunted Houses**

- 1. All haunted houses shall conform to the City of Casper adopted International Fire Code 2006. Temporary structures not contained within a permanent building shall be fully self-supporting and capable of withstanding wind and snow loading conditions. The City of Casper Building Department may be asked to evaluate all such structures for safety. Their recommendations as to the safety of such structures shall be corrected prior to the house being opened to the public.
- 2. No fire protection systems (alarms or sprinklers) in any building shall be obstructed by the construction of this haunted house. Building exit signs and emergency lighting units shall not be obstructed or obscured in any manner. Electric exit signs and emergency lighting units shall be fully operational and shall be checked each day for proper operation. Any defects found shall be corrected prior to the public being admitted. Building exit doors shall not be covered or altered in any manner and shall be readily identifiable as exit

doors. Required exits shall not be locked and shall be openable from the interior without the use of a key or any special knowledge or effort. Exits shall open in the direction of egress. Exits shall not be blocked from the outside of the building by vehicles, barricades, or any other means. Ceiling shall not be less than 7 feet in height.

3. "NO SMOKING" signs shall be posted at the entrance. A "NO SMOKING" policy shall be enforced by the sponsoring entity and the sponsors shall make a "No Smoking" announcement to each tour group prior to entry.
4. Trained staff members equipped with working flashlights shall escort each group through the haunted house. Staff members must know the interior maze, exit facilities, and enforce "no smoking" restrictions within the area. Escorts shall account for each person entering and exiting the haunted house-i.e. 5 in/ 5 out. A responsible party shall have a means to summon emergency assistance (telephone, cell phone or 2 way radios) available at all times when patrons are touring the haunted house. The number of persons to be included in each tour group shall be limited to an easily manageable number. No more than one group shall be escorted through the house at any time.
5. No readily combustible material (curtains, walls, sawdust, wood shavings, loose/baled hay or straw, corn stalks, table skirts, drapes, etc.) shall be used for construction or decoration in the haunted house unless it is flame retardant as supplied from the manufacturer (NFPA 701 certified). Other materials shall be treated with an approved flame retardant chemical utilizing approved application methods. The use of PLASTIC SHEETING OF ANY TYPE IS NOT ALLOWED unless documentation as to the flame retardant properties of the product is provided to the Casper Fire-EMS Fire Prevention Division. Certification from the manufacturer or labeled product packing is required. The Casper Fire-EMS Fire Prevention Division shall conduct a flame test of all black plastic and locally treated decorations prior to the event opening to the public. ANY MATERIALS FOUND NOT TO BE FLAME RETARDANT WILL RESULT IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE NOT BEING ALLOWED TO OPEN UNTIL ALL NON-TREATED COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS ARE REMOVED OR PROPERLY TREATED. THE FLAME RETARDANT PROPERTIES SHALL BE DOCUMENTED BY A CASPER FIRE-EMS REPRESENTATIVE.
6. All electrical wiring must conform to the National Electrical Code for temporary installations. Extension cords shall be rated for the appliances served and shall be protected from physical damage at all times. Extension cords shall be inspected for damage prior to installation. Damaged cords shall not be used. Cords shall not run through doors, walls, ceilings, etc. Power taps (plug strips) may be used provided they have a built-in circuit breaker and are plugged directly into an approved, permanently wired receptacle. Ground eliminating adaptors shall not be used. Any new wiring shall be installed by a licensed electrician. The City Electrical Inspector may be asked to evaluate all temporary wiring and devices for compliance with the NEC.
7. Fire extinguishers with a minimum 2A rating must be placed every 75 feet of travel distance. The haunted house staff must know where they are and shall be trained in their use.
8. One battery-powered single station smoke detector shall be installed at the ceiling level for each 900 square feet or fraction thereof of space occupied by the haunted house. The detectors shall be installed according to manufacturer's instructions. Activation of any smoke detector shall result in the main building lights being turned on at full intensity by a person designated to monitor the smoke alarms and stationed at the necessary light switch or controller whenever guests occupy the haunted house.
9. No open flames (such as candles, torches, or burners) are allowed. Heat sources (light fixtures, etc.) shall not be placed within 30 inches of combustible materials.

Signature of Responsible Party: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature indicates that the person who signed this document has read that above requirements for a operating a haunted house within the City of Casper and agrees to comply with said requirements. An operational permit will not be issued unless the haunted house and procedures comply with said requirements.

An on-site consultation and inspection of the “haunted house” must be conducted by Casper Fire-EMS Department Fire Prevention personnel before an operational permit is issued. Haunted Houses without an operational permit will be shut down.

If you have any questions or would like a pre-construction consultation, please contact the Fire Prevention Division at 235-8222.

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