

## **FIR-3.07 - Fire Performance Art**

### **FIRE PERFORMANCE ART**

*Administrative Rule Adopted by Portland Fire & Rescue Pursuant to Rule-Making Authority*  
ARB-FIR-3.07

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#### **PURPOSE:**

To provide guidelines to advise "Fire Performance Artists" of safety considerations and practices consistent with fire and life safety codes and public assembly safety concerns.

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#### **SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all acts of Fire Performance Art occurring within all areas in which Portland Fire & Rescue has fire prevention authority. Included are performances or demonstrations of fire breathing, fire juggling, etc. Not included: special effect pyrotechnics (these are addressed under separate permit).

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#### **BACKGROUND:**

Due to a lack of existing regulations, this policy was developed to address general fire safety for the use of Fire Performance Art. It was developed with the assistance of experienced performers in this field.

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#### **REFERENCE:**

1998 Oregon Uniform Fire Code, Article 1109.8.4.

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#### **DEFINITION:**

Fire Performance Art will be defined as any act (fire juggling, fire eating, etc.), in a public or private place, that utilizes fire for entertainment purposes, outside of a protective housing or in ways in which it travels through the air (by one person or between multiple persons). These acts do not include pyrotechnics otherwise regulated under separate permit.

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#### **PROCEDURES:**

The following information is provided for use by 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.

#### **II. Extinguishing Agents:**

- A. At least one 2A-10BC minimum classification fire extinguisher will be required for each performance to combat any flammable or combustible liquid fires. The Fire Marshal may require additional extinguishers, dependent upon the circumstances of the performance and occupancy.
- B. One wet towel for each active fire performer should be provided to extinguish the fire implement. The towel should be white in color to differentiate its use from other colors 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.

### III. Personal Safety:

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

B. One trained spotter should 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 the Fire Marshal for larger performances.

### IV. Fuels: Common fuels include:

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

***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. Fuel amounts on-site shall be limited to amounts allowed as per the 1998 Oregon Uniform Fire Code Article 7902.5.7.2.

**V. 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.

**VI. Clothing:** The clothing of performers should be of fire resistant materials such as natural fiber, Nomex, and/or PBI.

**VII. Smoking:** Smoking shall be prohibited within 10 feet of the performance area and in the area of fuel storage.

**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 may secure a Conditional Use permit through the Fire Marshal's Office. This no-cost 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.

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## HISTORY

Filed for inclusion in PPD June 13, 2003.

Originally adopted by Fire Marshal as Fire Prevention Division Policy Manual Document C-7, effective May 10, 2001.