

County of Los Angeles Fire Department

**Public Safety and Film Unit (PSFU)
Field Inspection Program**



County of Los Angeles Fire Department Public Safety and Film Unit (PSFU) Field Inspection Program

The Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County (District) is responsible for providing fire and life-safety oversight during filming, commercial photography, and special effect operations at production locations within the District's jurisdiction. Authority to provide oversight is vested to the District by the California Health and Safety Code, Section 12532, the State Fire Code and the County of Los Angeles Fire Code (Title 32), Chapter 48. The Public Safety and Film Unit (PSFU) will uphold and facilitate the District's oversight responsibility.

The PSFU, Fire Prevention Division, is responsible for reviewing all film related permit applications and ensuring an appropriate level of fire and life-safety oversight at each film location within the District's jurisdiction.

PSFU staff will assess each film, commercial still photography, or special effects permitted activity that could increase the risk of fire and/or life-safety exposure to the public and environment. PSFU staff will determine and require a commensurate level of fire and life-safety oversight at each film production.

Categories

Film productions will receive a Level I – Level III fire and life-safety oversight requirement as follows:

- Level I – Fire Safety Officer Oversight
- Level II – Fire Safety Advisor Oversight
- Level III – Field Inspection Program Oversight

Level I - Fire Safety Officer (FSO) Oversight

A Fire Safety Officer(s) is required when film activity presents a high-degree of risk of fire and life-safety exposure to the public or environment during the following productions:

1. Storage and Manufacturing Occupancies in areas open to the public (excluding employees), that require professional oversight beyond Level II and III.
2. Place of Assembly Occupancies in areas open to the public that require professional oversight beyond Level II and III.
3. Educational Occupancies during hours when students are in attendance.
4. Institutional Occupancies open to the public, or when occupants are restrained, non-ambulatory, confined, or incarcerated.

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5. Business and Mercantile Occupancies in areas open to the public (excluding employees), that require professional oversight beyond Level II and III.
6. Special Events when required by the Captain of the PSFU.
7. Production Tents of greater than 7,500 square feet and/or greater than 500 occupants.
8. Special Circumstances pertaining to areas not mentioned above that may present a risk to public safety, such as hazardous material locations, occupancy load exceeded within a structure, parks and recreational areas, beaches and harbors, and any area that the PSFU Captain sets the requirement for a Fire Safety Officer.

Level II - Fire Safety Advisor (FSA) Oversight

A Fire Safety Advisor(s) is required when film activities present a moderate degree of risk of fire and life-safety exposure to the public or environment during the following productions:

1. Pyrotechnics in all areas where explosives such as Black Powder, Lifters, Prima Cord (D.O.T. Class A), lightning machines, LPG, Lycopodium, Magnesium, or Aluminum are used.
2. Open-Flame Effects in all areas where open-flame effects such as simulated structure fires, vehicle fires, and body burns are used.
3. High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in proximity to flammable vegetation (brush/grass) when heat producing equipment and/or special effects are used. The PSFU Captain will retain the prerogative to increase or decrease life safety oversight requirements based on predicted climate conditions or the extent of production activities.
4. Aircraft Landings when related to filming as required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).
5. Stunts in public view that may cause congregation or impair fire access.
6. Any Outdoor areas where fire lanes, fire access roads, public streets/roads are closed or blocked when cast and crew is greater than 100. (Not in High Fire Hazard Severity Zone).
7. Interior Locations when cast and crew are 65 or greater.
8. Filming Ranches & Camps
9. Production Tents greater than 1,000 and less than 7,499 square feet or greater than 50 and less than 499 occupants.

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10. Open-Flame Effects – In Certified Studios

- LPG or natural gas fueled practical stoves, fireplaces, and campfires.
- Small fire effects: torches and lanterns.
- PSFU Captain will evaluate the event for specific use of candles, matches, and cigarettes.

11. Pyrotechnic Special Effects – In Certified Studios

- As required per conditions of the permit issued by the District.

12. Non-Certified Studios or Production Facilities

Level III - Field Inspection Program Oversight

The Field Inspection Program provides a cost-effective alternative to the film industry, when required to maintain fire and life-safety awareness at low-hazard film productions. Rather than imposing a Fire Safety Advisor during the time of a low-hazard film production, it is proposed that film companies be given an option to self-manage their safety risk by participating in the Field Inspection Program.

The Field Inspection Program allows participating **film-specific** Producer or Location Manager to maintain compliance with applicable fire and life-safety codes during productions that present a minimal degree of risk to the public or environment. A Fire Safety Field Inspection Checklist will guide the responsible party in maintaining fire and life-safety requirements.

Safety compliance will be monitored by PSFU Inspectors as they provide periodic fire and life-safety inspections at each Level III film production. The PSFU Inspector will immediately intervene if the Producer or Location Manager does not maintain the required conditions as indicated in the Fire Safety Field Inspection Checklist.

PSFU Captain will maintain the prerogative of increasing oversight requirements at each film production if additional fire and life-safety hazards become apparent.

Level III oversight provides participating Producers or Location Managers, in the Field Inspection Program, the responsibility for maintaining compliance with applicable fire and life-safety codes during the following film productions:

1. Place of Assembly Occupancies closed to the public.
2. Educational Occupancies closed to the public.
3. Institutional Occupancies closed to the public.
4. Business and Mercantile Occupancies closed to the public.

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5. Storage and Manufacturing Occupancies closed to the public.
6. High-Rise Buildings with an approved automatic fire sprinkler system installed with cast and crew less than 65 and production isolated from other tenants or occupants.
7. Residential Buildings (R-1 & R-3 occupancy) when cast and crew is less than 65
8. Outdoor areas when cast and crew is less than 100 (Not in High Fire Hazard Severity Zone). The PSFU Captain will retain the prerogative to increase or decrease life safety oversight requirements based on predicted climate conditions or the extent of production activities.
9. Permit Requirements: Level III oversight productions will require permit approval.

Field Inspection Program – Accountability

It is incumbent upon the Producer, Location Manager or the person on site with the highest authority to ensure compliance with and provide for fire and life-safety issues. The Producer, Location Manager or the person on site with the highest authority is responsible for:

1. Completing a Fire Safety Field Inspection Checklist on a daily basis.
2. A late or incomplete Fire Safety Field Inspection Checklist may result in the assignment of a Fire Safety Officer (FSO) or Fire Safety Advisor (FSA).
3. Failure to comply with the requirements identified within this document may result in an increased level of oversight and the revocation of permit and/or cancellation of film production.