Life Safety Division
Office of the Fire Marshal
231 E. Piccadilly Street
Winchester, VA 22601
Telephone 540.662.2298
Fax 540.542.1318

FIRE ART PERFORMANCES

**** PERMIT REQUIRED ****

SCOPE

This publication outlines the fire safety guidelines and permit applications requirements as well as inspection scheduling information related to fire art and theatrical performances before a proximate audience conducted within the City of Winchester. This is including, but not limited to, live theatrical/tribal performances, rehearsals, research and development, video/audio taping or filming of any television, radio or motion picture production. Fire jugglers, magicians, dancers, and fire stunts.

Pyrotechnics, permanent propane flame effects, temporary propane flame effects, candles, food warming open flame devices, fireplaces, fire pits, and restaurant cooking and consumer fireworks are not covered in this guideline.

Questions regarding the content of this publication should be directed to the Office of the Fire Marshal at 540-662-2298 during regular office hours, Monday thru Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

OVERVIEW

Fire Performance Art shall be defined as any act (fire juggling, fire eating, etc.) in a public or private place, which utilizes fire for entertainment purposes, outside of a protective housing or in ways in which it travels through the air (by one person or multiple persons).

PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

A permit shall be obtained from the fire code official prior to the date of the fire performance art taking place. A permit application can be obtained from the fire and rescue department office located at 231 E. Piccadilly Street or by going to our website at: Click for Permit Application

1. **Consent Letter** – A consent letter from the Property Owner of record giving permission for the fire performance to be conducted.

2. **Certificate of Insurance** – Provide proof of general liability insurance in the amount of one million ($1,000,000.00). The certificate shall also list the City of Winchester as an additional insured.

3. **Video or Demonstration** – The applicant shall provide a video or schedule a time for a live demonstration of the performance to be conducted.

4. **Site Plan Required** - A site plan of the property shall be provided with the permit application and shall include the following information:
   - Location address

- Location and clearances from structures and other combustible materials
- Distance to spectators
- Location of fire extinguishers and "No Smoking" signs
- Fuel station/holding area
- Spinout area (separate area away from performance zone)
- Signature, printed name, title, date and time the site plan was prepared.

5. **Schedule a Site Inspection-** A site inspection must be conducted prior to the issuance of a permit or the start of the performance. To schedule the site inspection, contact the Office of the Fire Marshal at 540-662-2298, Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm.

FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

All of the following conditions must be met and maintained before, during and after the permitted performance.

1. A Fire Marshal inspection must be conducted prior to the event.

2. **Space Considerations** – A 15-feet distance shall be maintained between the fire-involved item and any member of an audience, any combustible decoration, and any combustible item within the immediate performance area. A minimum 10-feet ceiling height is required.

3. **Fire Performers** – All performers shall be in good physical health and not under the influence of any judgment or reaction impairing substances to include alcoholic beverages, over the counter or prescription medications, or any illegal substance.

   Performer's costumes should be made of fire resistive materials or natural fiber such as wool, leather, or cotton.

4. **Safety Personnel (Spotter)** – One trained spotter shall be provided for each performance. The spotter shall be positioned between the active fire performer and the audience. Spotters should be trained in the proper use of fire extinguishers. The spotter may be a performer who is not engaged in the current performance. The fire code official may require additional spotters based on the unique circumstances of the performance.

5. **Extinguishing Agents** – A minimum of one (1) 2A-10BC multipurpose fire extinguisher shall be required for every five (5) performers at each performance. Additional fire extinguishers may be required by the code official based upon the unique circumstances of the performance and occupancy surroundings.

6. **Performer Safety** – Each performance area shall have access to one (1) listed fire blanket and one (1) five gallon open-topped bucket of water and wet towel(s).

7. **Fuel Types**. Approved common fuels used for fire performance art include: White Gas, Paraffin, Kerosene, Isopropyl, "Shell Sol T" brand fuel, "Allume Fue" brand fuel, and "Fire Water" brand fuel. *Gasoline is prohibited under any circumstances.*

   Performers shall have MSDS for all fuels used and be familiar with special needs for them.

8. **Fuel Quantities and Storage** – All fuels shall be stored in their original container(s) with the caps in place when not in use. The maximum quantity of fuel on the site shall be one (1) U.S. gallon per performer.

9. **Tools and Equipment** – Performers shall use well maintained tools that are inspected prior to each performance to ensure that all parts are in good condition and stable.

10. **Smoking** – Smoking is prohibited within 50 feet of the performance area and fuel storage. No smoking signs shall be posted accordingly.

11. **Clean Up** – Immediately after each performance, fuel buckets shall be closed and sealed and returned to their approved transport containers. Any residual fuels mopped up and removed. All tools shall be wrapped in a wet cloth and allowed time to cool.