

Film Production and Crew Member Safety Fact Sheet

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The Texas film and TV industry is thriving, bringing creativity, jobs, and billions of dollars into the state. The Lone Star State is a top filming destination not only because of new studios in cities like Bastrop, San Marcos, Mansfield, and Fort Worth, but also thanks to its open spaces, diverse landscapes, and a mix of small towns and large cities. More productions mean more opportunities — but also more risks.

Working on a film set can be exciting but also dangerous. Crew members often work long hours around heavy equipment, electricity, moving vehicles, and unpredictable weather. That's why safety must always come first. These tips can help protect everyone on set and keep productions running smoothly:

1. Plan for safety in pre-production.

Safety starts before filming begins:

- Scout locations for hazards such as uneven terrain or exposed electrical sources.
- Hold safety meetings with key crew to assign responsibilities and review risks.
- Include emergency contacts and local emergency facility details on all call sheets.
- Monitor and communicate weather conditions — especially important in Texas's unpredictable climate.



2. Follow on-set safety practices.

Every shoot day should prioritize safety:

- Conduct daily safety briefings, especially when stunts, weapons, or special effects are involved.
- Keep emergency exits and fire lanes unobstructed.
- Provide and require appropriate protective gear.
- Inspect ladders, scaffolding, and rigging before each use.
- Secure cables with mats or gaffer tape.
- Store tools and gear in designated areas when not in use.
- Clean spills immediately to prevent falls.

Common hazards on set

Film crew members may face a variety of risks, including:

Trips, slips, and falls.

- Cables and tools left on the ground, or wet surfaces can cause accidents.
- Falls from ladders or scaffolding can result in serious injuries.

Injuries from heavy equipment & lifting.

- Improper lifting techniques can strain the back, shoulders, or knees.

Electrical hazards.

- Exposed wires or incorrectly connected equipment can cause shocks or fires.

Weather exposure.

- Extreme heat or cold during outdoor shoots can lead to dehydration, heatstroke, or frostbite.

Vehicle and traffic hazards.

- On-location shoots near roads or in parking lots bring the risk of moving vehicles.

Fatigue and long hours.

- Long days and little sleep can affect focus and increase the risk of injury.

3. Address high-risk safety needs.

Take extra precautions for high-risk activities:

- Hire experienced professionals for stunts, pyrotechnics, and other specialized tasks.
- Treat all weapons — including props — as real; allow only trained personnel to handle them.
- Limit shoot days to no more than 12 hours to reduce fatigue-related risks.
- Ensure fire extinguishers are readily available and in working condition.

4. Hire and train safe crews.

Safety starts with the right people:

- Prioritize hiring safety-conscious crew members, especially in key roles like the first assistant director or key grip.
- Ensure that crew members are trained in areas such as electrical safety, fall protection, and emergency procedures.
- Encourage crew members to pursue relevant safety certifications and stay updated on industry best practices.
- Foster a culture where it's safe and encouraged to report hazards or unsafe behavior.

5. Prepare for emergencies.

Unexpected situations often arise, so being ready is essential.

- Have a clear emergency plan in place for each shoot location and ensure all crew members are familiar with the procedures.
- Monitor crew members for signs of heat exhaustion during hot weather; keep them hydrated and allow time to cool off.
- Keep a stocked first aid kit on set and ensure at least one crew member is trained to use it.
- Watch for wildlife such as rattlesnakes and fire ants and seek medical attention as needed.



6. Check electrical gear.

Electrical safety is critical

- Allow only trained crew members to plug in, operate, or repair electrical equipment.
- Use equipment that meets industry safety standards and is regularly inspected.
- Follow posted electrical load limits and never overload circuits.

7. Use the right lifting techniques.

Proper lifting helps prevent injuries and keeps everyone working safely:

- Bend your knees, not your back, when lifting heavy items.
- Ask for help with large or awkward loads — team lifting is encouraged.
- Use carts or dollies to move equipment whenever possible.

8. Protect your production with insurance.

Even with precautions, accidents can happen:

- Ensure your project is covered by appropriate insurance, including general liability and workers' compensation.

- Verify that insurance coverage extends to all locations and crew activities.

9. Speak up and stay safe.

Encourage proactive communication:

- Report any safety concerns immediately to the appropriate crew lead or safety officer.
- For more help, contact a Texas Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) safety specialist at 800-252-7031 (option 2) or safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov.

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Division of Workers' Compensation

www.txsafetyatwork.com

1-800-252-7031, Option 2

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