

14. FILM INDUSTRY

- *“Filming in California” - a Fire Protection Handbook, Published by the California State Fire Marshal Film Industry Unit*
- *PRC§ 4255 (Smoking and fires in area, prohibition, camping)*
- *PRC§ 4331 (Smoking or building fires upon National Forest Lands)*
- *PRC§ 4427 (Use of machinery in area where burning permits are required, required clearing and fire tools)*
- *PRC§ 4431 (Gasoline power saws etc., firefighting equipment)*
- *PRC§ 4442 (Spark Arresters required)*
- *PRC§ 4433 (Campfire Permit Required)*
- *PRC§ 4442.5 (Spark Arresters or Fire Prevention measures; Notice to buyer or lessee of necessity of use)*
- *PRC§ 4443 (Portable power saws, etc., regulations for use)*
- *36CFR §261.5(a)-(f) (Causing a fire, firing tracer bullets, causing timber or slash to burn, leaving a fire, allowing a fire to escape, building a fire without clearances)*
- *CCR Title 19 (Fireworks in California)*

California’s film industry generates billions of dollars in revenues to the state, furnishes countless jobs, and many times requests to work on the state’s wildlands. Thus, it is imperative that fire prevention personnel be familiar with the intricacies of this business.

First it must be recognized what specific types of filming activities are to occur and in particular, when a production company is preparing for action-type sequences. Once the activity is outlined, specifically the who, what, when, where and how aspects of filming, it must be determined whether or not the proposed filming activity is safe and can be approved.

It is important to know who to contact on the set as well as who is responsible for obtaining filming or special use permits. Common production will be; feature, television, commercial, documentary, student film, or still photography. Each may have differing fire safety needs. Once the type of filming is known the following should be determined:

- How much and what type of equipment will be brought to the filming location?
- Is any set construction required?
- How long will the company be filming? (hours, days, or weeks)
- What is the size of the cast?
- What type of parking do they require?
- Are they using flammable liquids, gases or pyrotechnic special effects?
- Are they using aircraft?
- What type of stunt sequences are planned?
- What type of gasoline or diesel operated equipment will be used?

It is important to know who some of the key people on the set are and what they do.

FILMING STAFF

Director: Has ultimate control of the set.

First Assistant Director: In charge of the set and everything that happens on it. This person is the most important contact on the day of filming.

Location Manager: Responsible for all location details and liaison with governmental agencies (film permit office, police, fire, park rangers, lifeguards, etc.).

Special Effects Coordinator: Required to have permits issued by the fire agency having jurisdiction whenever pyrotechnic special effects are to be used.

During agency review of a proposed activity by a film production company, the following guidelines and sequence of events should occur.

- Fire Agency and film production company representatives should discuss the proposed activity (pre-production construction, special effects or other fire/life safety hazards, dates, and times).
- A film production liaison should be named to the fire agency; i.e. location manager or unit production manager.
- Appropriate agencies issue special use permits, permits for special effects, welding/cutting permits, and check spark arresters.
- Determine if periodic site inspection will suffice or if a fire prevention person is needed to stand by.
- Make an inspection on the day prior to production and pass pertinent information on to new inspectors.
- Production company should be in compliance of all fire safety requirements prior to agency personnel arriving on the first day of filming.
- If a stand-by fire prevention person is assigned to the set, then an on-site inspection should be done.

If the film production company has changes after the agreed upon fire-safety requirements are set, the company is obligated to notify the fire agency. The fire agency in turn should advise the company that additional inspections may be made.

14.1 Special Use

On national forests, special use permit inspections are an essential part of the fire prevention program. These operations range from powerlines, road maintenance, resorts, summer homes, special events, and filmmaking and may include equipment requiring both single or multiple-position spark arresters. Most special use permits, if structures are present, will have fire plans much like the typical industrial operations. All inspections should be documented and the violations corrected.