



Parade Float Safety

Preparing floats and participating in parades can be fun and an educational experience. However, participants should be aware that there are inherent hazards associated with these activities and take appropriate precautions to prevent injuries to themselves and others. Float preparation and parade injuries can range from minor to serious and often include contusions, sprains/strains, lacerations, and fractures.

Float Preparation Safety Precautions

When designing and preparing a parade float follow the parade organizations and local authorities' rules and guidelines, including local fire codes and float size restrictions.

Be knowledgeable about the proper use of any hand or power tools before working on a float. Review tool manuals and perform pre-use tool inspections for tool damage or disrepair.

Float decorative materials, such as tissues, crepe paper, flowers or other ornamental greenery, hay, paste, paper, cloth, should be flame resistant.

Float generators shall be securely mounted and located away from flammable materials and in well ventilated areas. Generator exhaust pipes shall be located away from decorative and flammable materials and away from float riders.

Float Vehicles:

- All Vehicles must have valid inspection stickers.
- Operator/Driver should have proof of valid insurance.
- Brake lights and tail-lights must be clearly visible at all times.
- Brake lights **MUST** be in proper working order.
- Tires must be in good condition.
- Vehicle load (speakers and racks) must be safely secured.
- No object shall extend past the front, back or sides of the vehicle.
- No flammable liquid may be carried or stored on floats or trailers.
- Floats shall have mirrors that eliminate blind spots around the vehicle.
- The towing vehicle and float shall each carry an approved 5 lb Type ABC fire extinguisher.
- Drivers shall have a clear field of vision that encompasses 180 degrees and provides a view in front and to each side of the vehicle.
- The towing vehicle shall have a functioning horn and brakes that are in good working order. In addition, the vehicle shall have been properly serviced with oil, water, and fuel. Extra gasoline shall not be carried on the float.
- Towed floats shall have safety chains attached to the towing vehicle.
- Parade floats should maintain a 30 foot interval between other entries in front of them.
- ***Alcohol consumption is strictly prohibited on trailers and on parade route.***

Float Riders:

- **NO ONE** should be permitted to ride on the float as it is being transported to and from the parade site.
- Children under 12 are not permitted to ride on a float without adult supervision.
- All passengers standing or sitting on the float must be wearing a safety belt or have handholds or other support while the float is moving. Secured safety rails, barriers, or ropes may be used to prevent a fall from the float.
- Standing participants shall have a stabilized body support with buckled safety belt or other means to prevent falling from unit.
- No person shall be wired or tied to the float.
- Riders may not be positioned where they might fall beneath the float, its wheels or between tow vehicle and float (e.g. no seating on rear edge of tow vehicle or on front edge of float).
- Float riders or articles hanging over the edge during the parade will be subject to removal.
- Riders are to remain on the float once the parade begins and at all time when the float is in motion.
- Float riders shall not throw candy or other items to spectators. Candy or other items may be distributed to spectators by hand from parade participants walking along-side the float.
- Float riders shall not spray water or other fluids at spectators.
- No person may board a moving truck, float or other parade vehicle.
- No person may distribute promotional items from floats or trailers that are either moving or stationary on route.
- Alcohol consumption or smoking on the float is prohibited.

Fire Safety Recommendations

- Each float shall have an ABC type fire extinguisher.
- The fire extinguisher must have a current State Fire Marshal certification tag indicating that the extinguisher has been serviced within the last year. The gauge must indicate that the extinguisher has pressure. The extinguisher must be mounted so that it is accessible to the operators. Do not obstruct the extinguisher with decorative material to hide its location.
- Open flame devices are prohibited on parade floats. The use of fuel fired torches, candles or similar devices which can ignite the parade float are prohibited.
- Fireworks are not permitted to be discharged.
- No smoking on or near any floats at any time.

This Alliant Risk Control Consulting fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice.