

KENNEDY THEATRE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES
GOVERNING COORDINATION BETWEEN HOUSE AND STAGE
Version dated August 1992; revised 2005

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

On Campus: Security #66911

Off Campus: Ambulance #66911

Fire Department #66911

Hawaiian Electric, for information only, 548-7961

Police #66911

I. WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE IF THERE IS A PROBLEM IN THE THEATRE AND THERE IS NO NEED TO STOP THE SHOW?

The House Manager and Stage Manager should ALWAYS keep each other informed and COOPERATE if necessary during a problem.

1) Alert the house, box office staff and stage staff when it seems appropriate or necessary. House staff includes the House Manager (HM), Assistant House Manager (ASM) Box Office staff; stage staff includes the Stage Manager (SM), Assistant Stage Manager (ASM), Graduate Assistant on call (GA), crew in the sound and light booth, and all stage running crew members. Usually, in an emergency when the show does not have to be stopped, the HM & SM need to communicate and then alert those people who can help her/him deal with the problem and handle the crisis.

2) If necessary, have the booth, Box Office or GA call Security or an ambulance. Security requires that they be notified first, and they will call ambulance, fire, or paramedics directly.

POSSIBLE TYPES OF PROBLEMS:

1) Audience members who are rowdy, talkative, distracting: the ushers should alert the HM who will politely ask the patrons to calm down. If the patron persists, the HM has the option of asking them to leave. If they are extremely rowdy, and will not leave, Security may be called and asked to escort the patrons out of the theatre. If the house asks a patron to leave because of disruption, her/his money may be refunded but at a later time.

2) An actor trips and hurts herself/himself backstage: Staff needs to determine if injury is minor and show can go on with actor or without.

3) Scenery falls over: often an actor may be able to cover while she/he scenery or a stage hand adjusts scenery.

4) Light board fails briefly, props are missing, something on stage happens that results in a long pause: for pauses of less than thirty seconds, it is better to not interrupt the show, however, if this is a backstage problem, the HM should be made aware of the reason in case patrons are upset and the situation needs to be explained to people who inquire. If there is a pause and the audience does

not seem to be upset, there is no need to explain. However, if many people start becoming worried that the show has paused, the HM may explain to the audience what has happened.

II. WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE TO STOP THE SHOW

Assess the situation and CALL SECURITY #66911

1) If it is an onstage or backstage emergency, it is possible to make the audience believe that what is happening is part of the show. Sometimes the problem can be handled during a long intermission; or a special intermission can be called between scenes and the problem can be taken care of. If this is not possible, the SM and the HM should assess the extent of the problem. An actor in the play that the audience trusts and is familiar with should appear on stage and inform the audience that due to technical problems the show be stopped (for a period of minutes or for the evening.) **DO NOT TELL THE AUDIENCE THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM. DON'T USE THE WORD "FIRE" IN FRONT OF THE AUDIENCE UNLESS IT IS TRUE AND YOU NEED TO USE IT TO GET THEM MOVING.** If an actor is unable to give a message on stage, a voice coming over a microphone from the control booth ("Voice of God") is also appropriate. (KT rarely has this capability hooked up however.) The HM or the SM can also go onto the stage and explain that the show is being stopped. The HM is more appropriate for this than the SM because many audience members are already familiar with the HM but the SM may be more available.

2) If there is a House emergency, the SM should be made aware of the situation. The HM should have the Box Office staff or the booth crew call Security as soon as possible.

III. TYPES OF EMERGENCIES THAT MAY OR MAY NOT REQUIRE STOPPING PERFORMANCE:

POSSIBLE SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEMS (HEART ATTACK, SEIZURES, STROKE)

Warning signs for stroke and seizures include shortness of breath, confusion, dizziness or disorientation.

Warning signs for heart attaches include pain in chest, sweating, nausea, shortness of breath.

Warning signs for shock include irritability, nausea and vomiting, pale moist skin, blue tinge to lips and nails, rapid breathing.

1. Call Security to alert emergency services
2. Follow basic precautions for preventing disease transmission.
3. Care for life-threatening conditions.
3. Continue to monitor the airway, breathing, and circulation.
4. Keep the victim comfortable (have lie down, elevate feet, cover with blanket as needed).
5. Do not give the victim anything to eat or drink unless you are dealing with a diabetic emergency and the victim is conscious.

CIVIL DEFENSE WARNINGS (Hurricanes, Tidal Wave, etc.)

If civil defense sirens are sounded, this is a warning of dangerous weather conditions. It can also mean an attack is eminent. Because the auditorium is fairly weather and sound proof, the Box Office or AHM in lower lobby is more likely to hear the warnings. The Box Office should immediately notify the HM, who should immediately notify the SM. The HM should have the Box Office staff keep a radio (battery operated radio can be found in Theatre Manager's office) on and report the General Instructions given by Civil Defense. Hurricanes cause winds, rains, floods, and blackouts. The HM and SM may decide to cancel the rest of the show, or warn the audience at an appropriate time. Usually, we are aware of poor weather conditions ahead of time, and may decide to cancel the show before it begins. If we are in the midst of the performance and the weather is very bad, it is possible that it would be safer to keep audience and performers in the theatre. Flashlights and battery powered lights should be constantly checked in case of a power outage.

BOMB THREATS

Person receiving a bomb threat call should do the following when listening to caller or when listening to voice mail message:

Note time of call

Try to remember exact message from caller; if message is on voice mail **DO NOT ERASE IT!**

Especially note time that caller says bomb is to go off

Try to determine what bomb looks like

Notice background noises -- is there anything distinctive?

Is caller male or female?

Guess age of caller

Does person have an accent or other distinctive voice feature?

Person receiving call should notify campus security immediately, then notify house manager. The House Manager should inform Stage Manager. Security should be called, if they have not been called already, and consulted about stopping the show or evacuating the theatre. If an immediate decision is made by security to evacuate the theatre, either actor or voice over the microphone would be the best way to approach the patrons. Evacuate the theatre and wait for Security to arrive. A decision to evacuate is always the prudent one to make if you must make a decision before Security arrives.

- 1) Have Box Office or Booth Crew call Security
- 2) Make public announcement; if there is any chance the show will continue, instruct the patrons to wait outside of the theatre so they will know when the show begins.
- 3) Begin evacuation of the theatre, turn on house lights; turn on all outside lights for audience exit.
- 4) Drop the main curtain if appropriate.
- 5) Turn on stage work lights.
- 6) Prepare for refunds in event show is not able to continue.
- 7) Continue with the show if a minimum of time is lost.

POWER FAILURE - LIGHTS BLACKOUT

It is important to remember that when there is a blackout there is no power and the headsets used to communicate between front of house and stage will not work for long. They are on an APS backup that will be good for a short period of time only. Walkie-talkies will be a more reliable means of communicating in an power outage. The emergency lights will remain on for approximately 30 minutes. The HM should contact the box office and have them or the usher call Security -- phones inside the building should still work, but if not, call from the emergency blue phone in front of theatre. When the blue phone is picked up Security is alerted. Use a transistor radio to check reports on the extent of the blackout or call Hawaiian Electric for an update.

The HM or designated actor should come down to the stage since she/he will have the clearest access to the stage. When an actor or HM makes announcements to the audience, keep audience as calm as possible. Have the audience remain in their seats and have the cast/crew sit wherever they are on stage. The megaphone that should be located in the back of the house can be used to address the audience. Although you might want to wait for a few minutes to see if the power returns it is safest to begin evacuation. If necessary the SM, backstage crew, and cast should help. See section regarding EMERGENCY EXITS.

HM and Backstage staff should have a plan ready to evacuate the audience, discussed before an actual emergency.

IV. IN CASE OF FIRE

Small Fires Backstage

Always prepare to evacuate with any fire in the building, however big or small. If a fire is contained before evacuation is begun, there may be no need to proceed with evacuation. HM must be alerted in the event of any fire and must prepare for evacuation. Call Security (66911) to alert Fire Dept. and have them assess damage. If there is any doubt about fire containment, **PROCEED WITH EVACUATION!**

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURES:

1. Call Security or instruct Box Office, Control Booth, GA or House staff member to call.
2. SM or nearest stage hand should drop fire curtain. Make sure crew knows how to do this.
3. Turn on house lights.
4. Actor, Voice over Microphone or HM with megaphone should take the stage, and announce the need to evacuate the theatre. Assure patrons ticket monies will be refunded. Try not to create a panic situation. Move quickly. Try to keep calm, realize that people will be panicking if they smell smoke or see a fire.
5. Pull fire alarm if needed to alert people to evacuate realizing the fire alarm is an internal alarm only.
6. Evacuate the House using as many exits as are free from fire or smoke danger.

7. Audience should assemble at East-West Center's Jefferson Hall under the lanai, across the street from the front of the theatre. Audience will be given further instructions from this location.

8. Cast and crew should assemble at vending machines across the back parking lot outside of Physical Science Building. Stage Manager should take roll to make sure all are out of the building.

V. GENERAL INFORMATION

EMERGENCY EXITS AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Both HM and SM should be familiar with the exits of house and stage. It is a good idea to remind the cast and crew of the emergency exits before the run of the show. HM should point out emergency exits to ushers before each performance.

The HM can use SM and stage crew and casts as ushers because they are more familiar with the building. Main exits in the house to be used are two side doors with the green EXIT sign on them and the doors in the back of the house, leading down the stairs to the front. If it is daytime, have ushers open the lanai doors to permit more light as well as the downstairs lobby doors, but have ushers standing outside each lanai door. The audience should be kept from milling in the lobby or going on stage. Do not let patrons onto the lanai in an emergency. It is safest to have the audience exit through the side doors and at the top of the auditorium.

Staffing in an evacuation: Staff should immediately pick up a flashlight and assist with doors and handicapped persons at side emergency exits (one per exit). At least one staff member should be in lower lobby with flashlight assisting people from stairs to front exit if it is being used. Make sure downstairs doors have been opened up so there is easy access out of theatre.

Wheelchair patrons (and disabled patrons) should exit out the side nearest to their seat location. They must exit out to the front of the theatre using the side passageways (the same way that they entered the theatre.) Turning toward the back of the theatre will stop them at the stairs and stop others from getting past them. House staff should help direct wheelchair patrons to appropriate exit way and should follow them to the front to ensure their exit.

Stage cast/crew should either exit through the side exits (or they can exit through the scene shop doors if necessary, but not during a blackout.) Both HM and SM should check to make sure that the exits are unobstructed and usable at all times. SM should also be aware of the problems a set may create in terms of exiting or fire hazards.

House staff should be last to leave theatre and should check hallways and bathrooms before evacuating themselves. Stage Manager and Shop GA should do same for backstage areas.

LOCATION OF PHONES (IN HOUSE AND PUBLIC)

There is not an outside line or public phone inside the house. If a phone is needed HM can call the box office, the box office staff can either call on their phones or use the emergency phone outside the box office at Kennedy Theatre. There are also pay phones outside the box office as a last resort.

There are outside phone lines at the following locations: In the sound and light booth and in the box office, by the stage left SM station and in the scene shop and in publicity office. The public phones are located outside of the box office in front of the theatre. The Blue Emergency phone is located outside the theatre in front of the box office.

There are house intercom phones in the following locations: By the stage left SM station, in the back of the house, in the sound and light booth, in the box office, in each of the dressing rooms, and the costume shop.

ALWAYS HAVE FLASHLIGHTS AVAILABLE AND USEABLE

SM should make sure there is at least one flashlight on each side of the stage and each crew member has one including booth crew. HM should make sure that flashlights are in the back of the house and that each usher has one. The flashlights should be checked each show to make sure they are functional. Flashlights should be in the Box Office as well. Flashlights for backstage are kept in the tool shed in the scene shop. House flashlights are kept in the fire hose containers in the back of the house during performance, and in the top drawer of the file cabinet in the publicity office at other times.

LOCATION OF FIRE EXTINGUISHERS, HOSES AND FIRE ALARMS

FIRE HOSES

There are two in the back of the house, one in the scene shop, two in the lobby by each bathroom and one at the foot of the stairs leading to the dressing rooms. It is not recommended that these be operated by anyone other than people who have had fire extinguisher training.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

There is one in each of the fire hose cases in the back of the house, and one by each bathroom in the lobby. There are three extinguishers in the scene shop; by the refrigerator, the corrugated door and the outside exit doors. On stage they are on stage left by the SM's position, and on the stage right side by the back wall. There is one in the hallway between the lab and the mainstage. There is one at the foot of the stairs leading to the dressing rooms.

FIRE ALARMS

There is one fire alarm in the lobby by the women's restroom, one in the Lab Theatre, one in the scene shop by the loading door, and one at the bottom of the stairs leading to the dressing rooms. These fire alarms are local alarms and will only be heard throughout the theatre. They do not alert Security. If there is an audience in the House, unless they can already visibly see the fire, it is best not to use the alarms or they may cause a panic situation.

LOCATION OF FIRST AID KITS

There are first aid kits in the scene shop, outside the costume shop, and the Front lobby next to the Women's restroom. There is a portable first aid kit that can be taken to the Lab Theatre or used elsewhere. It resides with the House Management staff.

SMOKING

Smoking is not allowed anywhere inside the theatre. Smoking is only allowed outside the theatre at least 20 feet away from the building.

REFUNDS AND EXCHANGES

Ideally, it is best to encourage the audience to hold onto their ticket stubs and come back to the Box Office another day to get a refund, or exchange their tickets. The HM should instruct an usher or staff member to hand out refund slips (in the top drawer of file cabinet in Publicity Office) the day of the performance. Refunds should be given if the majority of the show (3/4) was unseen by the audience. This is a difficult situation and should be discussed with the Theatre Manager if time allows.

VI. PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

- 1) Check all flashlights before each production, performance or event.
- 2) Check all exit sign lights and aisle lights.
- 3) Check that house side exit hall lights are on before every performance
- 4) Test emergency lights - make sure they are all working!
- 5) Check to see that exit ways are clear of all obstructions, especially during performances!
- 6) Check that megaphone is working and is in theatre where it can be located.

DON'T PANIC

Use common sense. Keep a general set of rules in your mind as to what you would do in various crisis situations. Play "What If?" Try to figure out what to do in various crises together with the SM **before** the run of the production. In any situation, contact UH Security. They are to contact any outside agencies. However, use your best judgement to get the assistance you need as fast as you need it.

How to Use a Fire Extinguisher



IF YOU FIGHT A FIRE, REMEMBER THE WORD PASS...
PULL... AIM... SQUEEZE... SWEEP...



P

PULL... Pull the pin. Some extinguishers require releasing a lock latch, pressing a puncture lever or other motion.

A

AIM... Aim low, pointing the extinguisher nozzle (or it's horn or hose) at the base of the fire.



S

SQUEEZE... Squeeze the handle. This releases the extinguishing agent.

S

SWEEP... Sweep from side to side at the base of the fire until it appears to be out. Watch the fire area in case fire breaks out again, and repeat use of extinguisher if necessary.



REMEMBER THE WORD PASS...
PULL... AIM... SQUEEZE... SWEEP...

