



Going Beyond California Code, part II Recommendations for Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters and Grandstand Bleacher Safety

This is a follow-up to the article Tom Allen, CFSA's safety manager, wrote for August's fyi newsletter explaining why CFSA's safety specialists sometimes make recommendations that go beyond state code requirements. If you missed this article, log onto

www.cfsa.org and you'll find a direct link to the article in the news summaries at the top of the Home page. You can also request a copy by contacting Tom at 916/263-6186.)

As Tom Allen, CFSA's safety manager, explained in his *fyi* article last month ("For Safety Reasons, CFSA May Encourage Fairs to Go Beyond "Up to Code"), there are certain situations when on-the-job experience leads CFSA's safety specialists to recommend safety precautions above and beyond those mandated by California code. You'll see in these two examples offered by Tom, how heading off accidents *before* they happen is a Safety Department priority:

Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters

For years the California Electric Code **did not** require Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) devices near sinks, drinking fountains, public rest rooms or any other location where water and electricity were within six feet of each other inside a commercial building. (GFCIs are designed to prevent electrical shocks by interrupting — or tripping — a circuit when a difference in current is detected between the hot and neutral wires.) During this same time, however, the Code did require GFCI devices in all residential buildings when water and electrical

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CFSA's Special Events Coverage is for Family Reunions, Weddings and Quinceañeras, Too

As more and more people discover the advantages of using their local fairgrounds for wedding receptions, baptisms, family reunions, club meetings and more, do them a favor and bring up the benefits of purchasing their liability protection through CFSA's Special Events Program: it's convenient ~ they can purchase it at the fairgrounds; it's easy ~ there's very little paperwork; and it's very competitively priced. Another benefit is that CFSA's program offers liquor liability coverage, a requirement when alcohol is being sold.

Rosalyn Johnson, CFSA's senior liability claims examiner, notes that while some homeowner's policies may cover the party host if someone is injured at their event, purchasing outside coverage will keep any accidents from impacting their homeowner's policy rates. You can tell them too that their home-owner's policy may not have sufficient limits or the protection language required by your fair. In addition, some insurance agencies may charge a fee for issuing an insurance certificate with the specific added language.

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Purchasing Services News and Notes

For more information about the following items or to make a purchase, please contact Karen Gallay, CFSA's purchasing agent, at 916/263-6191 (unless otherwise noted).

2002 Ford Taurus

The Santa Cruz County Fair has a Ford Taurus station wagon for sale. For information, contact Yvette Jordan at the fair, 831/724-5671.

Employee-Right-to-Know Compliance Poster Alert

Karen recently learned that fairs are being approached by a compliance poster organization offering Employee Rights posters for sale as they warn the fairs that without the correct poster, the fair could be fined \$17,000. If your fair purchased and posted the 2005 Employee Rights poster offered by CFSA at the beginning of the year, you ARE in compliance. If you have any questions, contact Karen. Updated

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Mark Your Calendars

CARF, CCA, CFSA and WFA will be closed on Columbus Day, Monday, October 10th.

Did you know that Colorado, in 1905, was the first state to observe a Columbus Day? Columbus Day has been celebrated annually since 1920 and in 1937 President Franklin Roosevelt proclaimed every October 12 as Columbus Day. And that's where it remained until 1971 when Congress declared it a federal public holiday that would always fall on the second Monday in October.

"If a cluttered desk signs a cluttered mind, of what, then, is an empty desk a sign?"

~ Albert Einstein

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Let's hear from you!
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"I've done the calculation and your chances of winning the lottery are identical whether you play or not."

~ Fran Lebowitz

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Going Beyond California Code, continued

outlets are within six feet of each other. Fortunately, from CFSA's perspective, the Code was recently rewritten and now GFCIs are required in all new residential *and* commercial building construction.

Why there was a difference for so many years, Tom said he doesn't know. Perhaps there was an assumption that people didn't shave, blow-dry their hair, or use electrical appliances near water in public places. Or, it may have been that the construction industry didn't want to use them because of the additional cost or the GFCI's sensitivity. (Many of the early GFCI outlets were prone to tripping easily and were often considered a nuisance by the people using them).

Since the early 1990s, however, CFSA has recommended that all fairground electrical outlets be protected by a GFCI when within six feet of a water source. This wasn't, and in some cases still isn't, a recommendation that's well-received by some CFSA fairs. So why did CFSA continue to make it? "It's simple," Tom says, "Circuit breakers are designed to protect equipment, GFCI devices are designed to protect lives."

We all know from experience that carnival personnel, exhibitors, concessionaires, entertainers, fair staff and the public do use electrical appliances in fairground rest rooms and in livestock barns, Tom said. GFCIs are relatively inexpensive and easily installed by a qualified electrician; a properly installed GFCI will protect both people and animals from electrical shock.

Grandstand Bleachers

During the past decade, Tom pointed out, the California fair industry has encountered significant losses from accidents involving bleachers. And all of these incidents have involved young children who fell from the seating area of a bleacher into the structure or onto the ground below, with the children sustaining lifelong injuries. While, arguably, there are numerous factors contributing to these types of accidents, there are steps fairs can take to reduce the potential for accidents with relatively inexpensive changes to the bleachers.

The current California Building Code allows a 9-inch gap between a bleacher's footboard and seat bottom when the seat is over 30 inches in height. CFSA, Tom said, strongly recommends that this gap be no more than 4 inches and, he noted, CFSA isn't alone in its recommendation. The International Code Council, the National Building Code of the Building Officials and Code Administrators, the Southern Building Code Congress International, the National Fire Protection Agency 101 Life Safety Code, and the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission all make the same recommendation. CFSA bases its recommendation on the fair industry's accident experience and the belief that California's Building Code is behind current safety standards.

The Moral of the Story

To sum up, Tom said, our recommendations are to install GFCIs wherever water and electricity are within 6 feet of each other, and to reduce bleacher gaps from 9 inches to less than 4 inches. Our goal is to reduce the possibility of a serious or fatal injury to a fair patron or employee.

Questions on what you've read? Talk to Tom at 916/263-6186.

Special Events, continued

In addition to the peace of mind that comes from knowing facility renters have adequate coverage, remember too that at the end of the year, CFSA will reimburse your fair 5% of the Special Events Program fees you collect throughout the year.

If your fair needs any additional Special Events Program brochures to hand out or if you have any questions about liability protection, call Rosalyn at 916/263-6171, or Cailee DeFoe, CFSA's risk analyst, at 916/263-6145.

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2006 posters, Karen added, will be available at the beginning of next year.

Contaminate Cleanup Kits

Be prepared! Take a minute to check that your fair has a supply of contaminate cleanup kits that meet the current health and safety standards for the handling and disposal of bodily fluids. Karen knows the requirements; give her a call if you're not sure whether or not your kits are up to code.