

SAFETY CURTAINS LANTERNS & DRENCHERS



RB Health and Safety Solutions
FREE RESOURCE DOCUMENT

A Safety Curtain or "Iron" is a mechanical curtain that separates the auditorium from the stage house.

Its primary role is as a smoke separation device to protect the audience from the smoke created by a fire on stage and allow a safe evacuation. It provides a minimum of 60 minutes fire separation between front of house and rear of house areas, as long as a firewall is in place substage.

Safety Curtains were made mandatory in the 19th century when gas was the source of stage illumination. They are not mandatory in new theatre builds.

The drencher - is a water sprinkler system designed to provide water on to both the safety curtain and the tracks it runs down whilst it descends. It is not designed or needed as a cooling system once it lands on stage.

The drencher control at stage door is for the sole use of the Fire and Rescue Service.

In certain circumstances the Fire and Rescue Service may choose to turn the drencher back on to help give them potentially more time to tackle a situation.

The lantern - provides mechanical ventilation which removes smoke from the stage house.

This is key to creating the smoke separation required to allow the safety curtain to achieve its full effect.

The ideal operation procedure should be as follows:

1. Pull drencher
2. Drop safety curtain
3. Once curtain lands stop drencher
4. Open lantern
5. Leave the building, meet at designated area

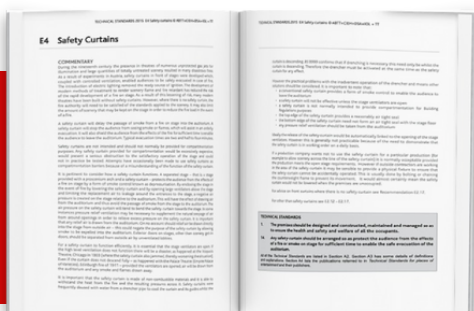
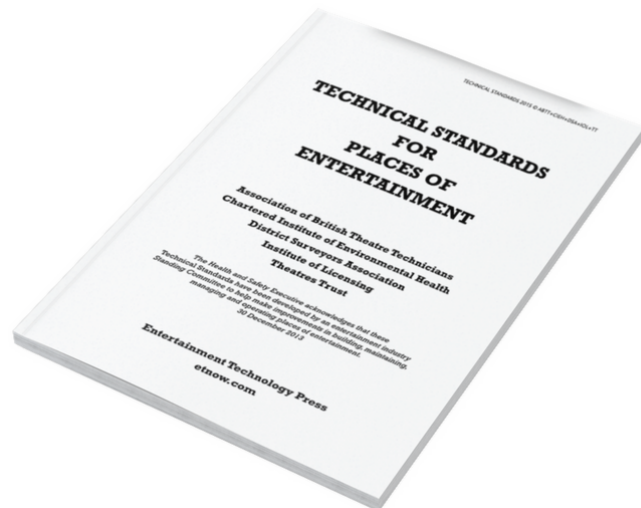
If it is not safe to operate any of the above elements then staff members should not put themselves at risk.



Should a safety curtain, lantern or drencher be in place within your venue, it is a legal requirement to ensure that access is clear to their operation controls.

You are also required to maintain, test and check their functionality as per the relevant BS requirements.

For further information, please see section E4 from the Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment.



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