



TOWN OF BELMONT

OFFICE OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

STEVEN J. DALTON, CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

April 30, 2008

Subject: Parade Float Safety
From: Code Enforcement Office

Dear Belmont Old Home Day float providers and committees,

I am sure we all can recall the tragic event that happened with a young cub scout in December of 2006 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. To refresh all of our memories a young cub scout fell from a moving parade float and was run over by the trailers dual axles which resulted in the loss of his life. The tragedy was compounded by the season. This tragedy occurred during a Christmas parade, at a time that is to celebrate giving not losing.

In light of this tragic event the Town of Belmont has decided that it is time to take the responsibility of ensuring that all floats are safe for all **Float Drivers, Spectators, and Riders**, before a tragedy similar to this occurs during our celebrations. It is not our intention to make providing a float in the parade complicated and costly however, we do have a responsibility to ensure the Safety of all participants.

Attached to this document is the Safety Requirements for Floats participating in all parades in the Town of Belmont along with a Safety Inspection Checklist. This must be completed and signed off by a parade official before releasing a float to participate in a parade. The checklist is required to be kept by the driver of the float until all participants have departed from the float and the procession is over. At the completion of the Parade the checklist is to be returned to the Parade official for filing. This document must be retained by the host Town/City or by the organization responsibility for the parade.

Once again it is not our intention to make providing a float a complicated and costly nightmare or discourage you from providing a float; it is merely to ensure the safety of all participants.

Steven J. Dalton
CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

cc: Board of Selectmen

Town of Belmont Float Safety Requirements

- 1. Float & Running Gear** – The foundation for a tow float is typically a sturdy flat trailer bed with pneumatic wheels. All load supporting areas on the float should be wood, steel or other structurally competent material (not cardboard). Wheels, tires, dollies, axels, bearings of adequate sizes and strength to support the total load of the float are required. Wheels and tires must be in good condition and vehicle brakes sufficient to stop the float when loaded. The authority having jurisdiction with the parade shall have the right exclusive right to ban any unsafe vehicle.
- 2. Vehicle Maintenance** – Vehicles pulling floats shall be serviced for gas, oil, water, tires and battery prior to reporting to the staging area. Vehicles licensed for highway use shall provide the inspecting official with proof of insurance. **No** extra gasoline may be carried on the float. For emergencies, a horn or other sounding device is to be present.
- 3. Driver Vision/Communication** – Floats decorations shall be designed to allow the driver 180 degrees clear vision to the front and sides of the float or tow unit. If 180 degrees vision cannot be provided, a spotter(s) with clear vision of these areas must accompany the float as a guide. Drivers shall also have clear view of (or communication with) float riders in the event of a problem on that float.
- 4. Fire Extinguisher** – At least one (1) 10 pound ABC fire extinguisher shall be carried in a easily accessible, designated location on the float or tow vehicle. The fire extinguisher shall be sealed, tagged, and dated with in the previous 12 – month period. Open flame displays, roman candles, and fire works are prohibited on floats and tow vehicles.
- 5. Rider Safety** – All participants riding on floats shall have solid sitting arrangement with hand holds readily available to them. Any standing participant shall have a stabilized body support with buckled safety belt or other means to prevent falling from the unit. No person shall be wired or tied to the float. Secured safety rails, barriers, or ropes may be used to prevent a fall from the float. Safety rails and barriers are to a minimum of 36” tall. No unsecured riders may be located where they might fall beneath the float, its wheels or between the tow vehicle and float (e.g. no seating on rear edge of tow vehicle or on front edge of float). If present, children must be under adult supervision and seated at all times when in motion. Alcohol consumption or smoking on the float is prohibited.
- 6. Driver** – Float drivers shall have a valid driver’s license for the vehicle towing the float and be in competent condition to safely operate the vehicle. Driving under the influence of drugs or intoxicants is prohibited. For the safety of float riders, the driver must minimize abrupt starts and stops. The float safety checklist must be in the possession of the driver.
- 7. Generators** – Where used, generators shall be securely mounted on the vehicle with not less than 12” inches of clearance separating it from any combustible material. Any generator in a confined space (e.g. pick-up camper shell) shall not have any riders inside the same space.
- 8. Electrical System** – Where used for lighting, motorized decorations or other applications on a float, electrical wiring must be of a type approved for the use for which it is being employed, shall have sufficient capacity, shall be secured to prevent damage, shall have all connections secured via approved devices (or electrical boxes) and shall be properly fused. **No** bare wires or exposed electrical connections are permitted.
- 9. Speed** – Towed floats shall be capable of maintaining a minimum speed of 15 miles per hour during the parade. The speed when the float is occupied during the parade is limited to a maximum of 5 miles per hour.
- 10. Towing Safety** – Adequate primary (tow bar) and secondary connections (chains, cable, etc) devices shall be made between the towing vehicle and float. All connections shall comply with any and all applicable laws and standards. Primary and secondary connections shall be appropriate for the normal and anticipated loads.

11. General Safety – Hard objects, candy boxes, etc, should not be thrown from the float during the parade. Parade participants wishing to provide give- aways should have walkers along the float to **HAND OUT** the give-aways. **DO NOT THROW ITEMS INTO THE CROWD.**

Inspection

All floats will be subject to an inspection check for compliance with the float safety requirements prior to commencement of a parade. **The float safety checklist must be signed and in the possession of the driver at the start of the parade.**

Town of Belmont Float Safety Checklist

Name of Float Entry - _____

Float driver must have this Inspection Checklist in his/her possession the day of the parade. Driver must check off, sign and present checklist to the Officials for verification prior to the start of the parade.

- _____ 1. **Float & Running Gear** – Float and tow vehicle, supporting structure, wheels, tires and brakes are in good condition and sufficient for safe handling of float with riders on board.
- _____ 2. **Maintenance** – Float and tow vehicle are in good working order, properly serviced with gasoline, oil, water. If licensed for highway use, vehicles proof of insurance is available. No extra gasoline is carried on the float. For emergencies, a horn or other sounding device is present.
- _____ 3. **Vision/Communication** – Driver has proper 180 degrees forward vision (or spotters) as well as view of (or communication with) float riders.
- _____ 4. **Fire Suppression** – The float or tow vehicle has at least one (1) 10 lb ABC Type Fire Extinguisher, which has been serviced, tagged & dated. It is affixed to the unit within easy reach of the float driver and float occupants (or two (2) separate extinguishers may be used, as needed).
- _____ 5. **Riders** – Each float rider has a sturdy support, hand holds, belt restraint or other means to prevent a fall from the unit. No one shall be located where they could fall under the float. Safety of seated and standing riders will be assessed by the parade committee. Alcohol consumption and smoking on the float is prohibited. Riders have been cautioned to remain on the float during the parade and anytime the float is in motion.
- _____ 6. **Driver** – Float driver has valid license for the vehicle and is competent to drive the float safely. Driving under the influence of drugs or intoxicants is prohibited.
- _____ 7. **Generator** – Portable generator, if used, is securely mounted and separated from decorative materials. Generator is equipped with metal exhaust which extends to the exterior of the unit.
- _____ 8. **Wiring** – All float electric wiring used for light or other components are secured and appropriately guarded to prevent shock or fire.
- _____ 9. **Speeds** – Float unit is able to maintain a minimum of 5 miles per hour. Float speed shall not exceed 10 mph when float riders are on board and during the parade.
- _____ 10. **Towing** – Towed trailers and towed float has sturdy tow connections and safety cables or chains in place (and attached) which are of sufficient strength for proper handling.
- _____ 11. **General** – Riders have been advised that objects should not be thrown from the float in to the crowd.

The above inspection has been made and to the best of our knowledge this float is in accordance with the Town of Belmont's safety requirements and is acceptable for participation in the parade.

Float Driver - Name/Signature _____/_____ Date _____

Parade Official – Name/Signature _____/_____ Date _____

Please bring this checklist to your Safety Inspection, conducted at the start of the parade.