

INDUSTRY WIDE LABOR-MANAGEMENT SAFETY COMMITTEE

SAFETY BULLETIN #12

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF VENOMOUS REPTILES

1. Extreme caution should be taken when using venomous reptiles. Only qualified professional reptile handlers should supervise the use of all venomous reptiles on productions.
2. The Producer and venomous-reptile handler shall have a safety plan in place. This plan should include how to prevent the escape of the reptile, and how to safely recapture the reptile.
3. The safety plan shall also include the name and address of a nearby medical facility that is equipped to handle venomous-reptile emergencies. The location of the medical facility and the antidote shall be made known to the cast and crew.
4. The Producer shall, with assistance from the venomous-reptile handler, notify the medical facility that venomous reptiles are to be used in close proximity to personnel. Allow enough time for the notification to ensure that proper anti-venom will be available, depending on the type(s) of reptile(s) scheduled to be used. Anti-venom for some exotic snakes may not be FDA approved and it could be difficult to find a medical facility to administer it. Other sources, such as a zoo, may need to be contacted if the medical facility does not have the correct anti-venom.
5. Emergency transportation to this medical facility must be readily available in the event of an incident when working with venomous reptiles (e.g. bites; venom coming into contact with eyes or open wounds).
6. Only personnel essential to the scene will be allowed within a fifty-foot (50') radius of the reptile.
7. A representative of the American Humane Association shall be notified of the use of the venomous reptile.
8. The Production must obtain any required permits for having a venomous and/or exotic reptile working on set at a studio or a location.

9. Verify the venomous reptile handler or provider has all required permits or licenses for the reptile. For instance, when filming in California, the handler must have a "Restricted Species Permit" if the reptile is not native to California and is venomous and/or exotic. When filming in other jurisdictions, confirm that the required permits or other documents are obtained.
10. Proper protection (*i.e.*, barriers, gloves, adequate leg guards) for cast and crew who must work closely with the reptile shall be provided.
11. Before using any venomous reptile, an on-site safety meeting shall take place where these reptiles will be used. This should include the venomous reptile handler/provider, designated production representative, and anyone who will be working with or near the venomous reptile.

Safety meeting topics may include, but are not limited to:

- When and where the venomous reptile(s) will be utilized.
 - Possible risks to personnel who are involved.
 - Communication plan.
 - Emergency procedures.
 - Location of the medical facility.
12. Persons must wash their hands with warm water and anti-bacterial soap before and after handling reptiles.
 13. Snakes may only be milked on-screen or off-screen by an experienced professional snake handler familiar with the technique.
 14. In the event of a venomous reptile bite:
 - Call 911 right away.
 - Stay calm.
 - Immobilize the limb at approximately heart level.
 - Remove watches, jewelry, or constricting clothing items from the bite area.
 - Obtain proper medical treatment.

15. Milking a venomous snake's fangs in an attempt to lower the amount of available venom is not allowed because it does not entirely remove the venom and will continue to pose a threat to cast and crew.