



SAFETY DIRECTOR BULLETIN



PARADE RISK MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

Parades offer many benefits. They also present many risks that can be significantly enhanced if organizers do not collaboratively plan for them. Areas of vulnerability include traffic concerns, crowd considerations, fire hazards, mass violence threats, spectator safety, float design, parade participant behavior, and more.

Parade tragedies are not a new concern:

- Seven killed, dozens injured, a gunman opens fire during a July 4th parade, Highland Park, Illinois, 2022.¹
- A man dressed as Santa Claus, seriously injured, falls from a fire truck, Umatilla, Oregon, December 2020.²
- Generator causes the float to engulf in flames, Virginia Beach, Virginia, December 2013.³
- Eight-year-old boy dies, struck by a parade float, Edmond, Oklahoma, July 2013.⁴
- Seven-year-old dies from falling off a vehicle in a parade, struck by a float, Annapolis, Maryland, July 2013.⁵
- Man killed, fire truck in parade strikes tractor in a parade, Bangor, Maine, July 2013⁶
- Nineteen injured, multiple shooters open fire during Mother's Day parade, Louisiana, May 2013.⁷
- Four killed, 17 injured, train collides into a parade, Midland, Texas, November 2012.⁸
- One killed, 23 injured, horses broke loose and trampled parade attendees, Bellevue, Iowa, July 2010.⁹

Mitigating the risks associated with parades requires strategic and contingency planning, a policy supported by the local government, collaboration, training, and contractual risk transfer.

The Safety Director has developed the [Parade Planning Worksheet](#), which should be utilized by key stakeholders well in advance of any parade event.

The Parade Planning Worksheet is extensive. Organizers of large, complex parades will need to consider many of the risks involved. When planning smaller parades, organizers may be able to quickly consider and discount some risks; however, the considerations should be reviewed for each parade. Such a review should take place even for recurring parades, as often such parades can become larger and more complex year to year.

¹Ebrahimis, A., Smart, S., Paget, S., & Avarado, C. (2022, July 6). *These are the lives lost from the July Fourth Parade mass shooter*. Retrieved from CNN: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/07/05/us/victims-highland-park-illinois-shooting-fourth-of-july/index.html>

²Fireblawg. (2022, December). *Santa sues Oregon fire department for 500K*. Retrieved from Fireblawg: <https://www.firelawblog.com/2022/12/21/20842/>

³Maciag, M. (2013, December 24). *Parade deaths prompt safety recommendations for localities*. GOV - The Future.

⁴Associated Press. (2013, July 4). *Boy killed by dad driving Fourth of July parade float*. Retrieved from USA Today: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/07/04/oklahoma-parade-death/2490481/>

⁵CBS News. (2013, July 4). *7 year old falls from a vehicle during the Annapolis parade*. Retrieved from CBS News Maryland: <https://www.cbsnews.com/baltimore/news/child-killed-in-annapolis-during-4th-of-july-parade/>

⁶Munich Reinsurance America, Inc. (2014). *Focus On: Parades*. Munich RE.

⁷Ford, D. (2013, May 13). *19 injured in New Orleans Parade Shooting*. Retrieved from CNN: <https://www.cnn.com/2013/05/12/us/louisiana-shooting/index.html>

⁸National Transportation Safety Board. (2013, November 5). *Highway Railroad Grade Crossing Collision, Midland, Texas*. Retrieved from NTSB: <https://www.nts.gov/investig>

⁹*Parade horses trample Iowa July 4th Revelers*. Retrieved from CBS News: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/parade-horses-trample-iowa-july-4th-revelers/>