

Chair Power and members of the committee,

My name is Shira Goldeen and I was the Production Manager of a small/mid-sized theatre company in Portland, OR for a year and a half when I first moved to the area. While working on my first production with the company (as a stage manager before I was on staff), I discovered some safety concerns with the building. Among them were the primary rehearsal space in the basement emergency exit. There were originally 3 points of egress from the basement - the main staircase used in normal circumstances, an emergency staircase from the back of the rehearsal space, and a staircase directly from the scene shop (adjacent to rehearsal room) to the street. About 15-20 years ago there was a fire at the top of the staircase from the scene shop and the door has since been boarded over and the stairs are not safe for use. The door at the top of the staircase from the rehearsal room is incredibly difficult to open. As a shorter person, I was unable to open it myself without feeling in danger of falling down the stairs. **When I brought this up to management, I was told that it could be opened, just try harder. While I was on staff with the company, I brought this up periodically because I always felt unsafe working in the basement in case there was a fire and the main stairs were blocked. Management always brushed off my concerns** and I ultimately gave up mentioning personal safety concerns after I realized that making money was clearly more important to the founders than the safety and wellbeing of their employees and artists.

The building itself is an old building in inner-southeast Portland. Like most older buildings in the neighborhood, it has some structural issues and has faced general neglect over the decades. One of the prominent issues that staff/artists dealt with regularly was the leaking roof. There are tarps suspended above multiple desks in the office to prevent water from damaging computers/papers. **There are buckets hung in the theatre from the electrical grid to catch water in an attempt to prevent the water from damaging any lighting equipment or causing an electrical short.** The worst of the leaks is directly above the tech booth. The entire sound rack is covered with a tarp to keep the equipment dry and there is a system of buckets and tubes leading to a horribly water damaged corner of the booth with a hose to syphon all of the roof water into a large trashcan during the rainy season.

The electrical grid in the theatre was not properly rigged. There were points where the rigging was coming out of the ceiling and clearly looked unsafe. **A lighting designer made an anonymous OSHA complaint about the grid but OSHA did nothing beyond sending a notice of concern to the company.** The Executive Director (founder) did absolutely nothing to follow up or improve the status of the grid. The person who made the complaint was a friend of mine so I did know who it was. **The ED thought he knew who the anonymous complaint was made by and subsequently refused to hire that person.** He was incorrect in who he believed had filed the complaint. At that point I realized that if I were to speak up about safety concerns more or file a complaint myself he would likely know it was me and I was afraid of retaliation. At that time I simply could not afford to lose my job.

As Production Manager I would do everything I could to help protect the artists that were working in the space though often the best thing I could do was tell them unfortunately a concern was not worth bringing up because nothing would ever be done about it.

After I left the company, I along with **3 other former employees filed anonymous OSHA complaints with a myriad of safety concerns in the building.** An OSHA inspector did do a walkthrough of the building but unfortunately was only able to cite on of the concerns (emergency exit door from basement rehearsal room) due to there not being work happening in the other spaces mentioned in the

complaints. The inspector called me after the walk through and while I was pleased that at least someone went to the building, I was incredibly disappointed by the lack of follow through.