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# Rigging Report

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## What Happens After the Rigging Inspection?

Once a rigging inspection is completed and any repairs and adjustments are made everyone tends to feel good about the accomplishment. Far too often complacency sets in. We hear, "It was inspected a couple years ago; we don't need to worry about it." Later this becomes, "It's been making that funny noise for years, so it must be OK."

How do we sustain a focus on safety after the inspection? Here are four steps to encourage backstage safety:

**Do it again** - make sure you re-inspect every year

**Train** - keep your crew and staff well trained

**Know your system** - how often do you check your system?

**Communicate** - safety signage and manuals are essential

### Do it Again

The inspector needs to leave a sign in plain view that indicates when the next inspection is due - it's a great reminder. Then follow through and have the inspection done when it is due.

Rigging is shifting away from manual counterweight rigging to motorized systems. These are easy to use, but more complex to service and inspect. This makes the need for regular inspection and maintenance even more important.



For the past year all J. R. Clancy control stations have been furnished with service indicators. These turn on after a year. It's just like the annoying light on your dashboard. Nothing has gone wrong, but it's time to have a competent person inspect and perform routine maintenance on your system.

## Training

Too few organizations have formal backstage training programs. Most rigging systems are in schools, where there's a high

turnover of operators. Often training is handed down verbally. Pretty soon this is

third-hand information and a lot of wrong. This is why there needs to be ongoing training.

Training can be combined with the annual inspection. The person who's done the inspection can give you a good training session. The first step is to familiarize any new staff members with your system, by doing a walk through all of the components of the system. This is an effective way to become familiar with each element of the system and its function. Just because they've worked in a dozen other theatres does not mean they know the quirks of your theatre.

As part of training, it's important to make sure that that manuals exist and are accessible to the users. They're important because they provide a single, consistent written reference on how things should be done.



The manufacturer or dealer should provide manuals that are project specific, providing the correct operating information for your system. Operation of a counterweight system with a loading gallery vs. a system without a loading gallery is very different. Motorized systems have their own operating and safety procedures.

Make manuals accessible - all too often these are locked up in someone's office, and the users never see them. If you can't track these down, [generic manuals](#) are available at the J. R. Clancy website.

## Looking, Feeling, Listening

Now that you've become familiar with the theatre, and read the manual, you need to live with your system. Look over every piece of equipment before you use it. Did someone change something? Does it feel right (especially for counterweight systems)? Does it sound right? - this is even more important with motorized equipment, as there is no sense of feel.

## Communicate with Signage and Warnings



Signage is important, because it's always there. We provide comprehensive signage, covering basic operation and general backstage safety precautions

It also provides a place to list set capacities - this is critical information.

Plus, there's a spot to identify who made the last inspection, and when the next inspection is due. Again, it's another reminder to make sure this happens annually.

These signs can be [ordered](#) on our website.

Warnings are important. Almost any piece of equipment you buy today has warnings of the risks you may encounter - including your coffee maker! However, many rigging systems have little or no warning information.

In addition to general warnings, it's a good thing to have warnings right where the work is taking place - like this arbor label.



Look around your theatre - is there proper signage? Are the people working backstage trained?

If you have questions, please [contact me](#).

Tom Young

*We hope the articles in this e-mail were useful for you.*

*For more information please visit our website or call us toll free at 1-800-836-1885.*

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"HAPPY THANKSGIVING!"

~Your Friends at J.R. Clancy

