

Film production in western New York is increasing annually with producers from both New York and out-of-state taking advantage of the unique and beautiful regional locations for feature film, television, commercial, video, and multimedia projects.

For the private property owner, use of your home or business can be an exciting and possibly profitable opportunity when the scope of the project and the process involved is clearly understood. Determining appropriate contacts, establishing clear communications from the beginning, and identifying specific requirements and restrictions can facilitate the success of the project.

The following information is intended to assist you in gaining an understanding of the specifics of the project and to encourage you to realize the request is in fact a business proposal. As each project has specific considerations, all questions or needs cannot be addressed. This should, however, provide a basic foundation upon which to establish an agreement between you and the film company that will allow for a successful and pleasurable experience for everyone.

It is also important to understand that with the uniqueness of each film project, unforeseen circumstances can result which may require more time, need for additional space, extra personnel, etc. It is therefore important to recognize this is the norm in making films, not the unusual, and to consider contingency plans as well as discuss options or fees with the production company.

Location Use Information

1. A location scout or location manager generally makes initial contact. This person is often hired locally by the film company, but may also be from out-of-state. His/her credentials can generally be confirmed through the Buffalo Niagara Film Commission.
2. Determine the nature of the project and how your location will be used. Also, note if there will be special effects involved such as smoke, fire, gunshots, stunts, etc.
3. Determine exact number of days required for the shoot (include prep, strike, and back-up days). Note, that a day can be as long as 16 hours, day or night.
4. Arrange for a “walk-through” with the assistant director or location manager to determine exact interiors/exterior desired for filming; any “off-limits” areas as determined by owner; where equipment and vehicles will need to be positioned or parked; and any such areas as roof, fences, windows, etc. that may need to be used or altered during filming.
5. Determine what personal property of owners may be used for production. For items designated “off-limits” to production, determine how/where to store items not used and who will be responsible for packing and moving. Specific storage areas may need to be determined “for owners use only”.
6. Determine who will be allowed on the “set” during period of use and how access will be enforced.
7. Determine rules and regulations regarding: smoking, use of restrooms, water, trash, electricity, where meals will be eaten, floor coverings, etc. Determine utility costs up front with production company (heat in winter/air in summer) during all aspects of production.
8. Determine phone use (if applicable) and how the phone bill is to be covered.
9. Determine (if applicable) how the family will be accommodated during filming and any living expenses that may be required.
10. Designate parking for your personal vehicles.
11. Determine clean-up requirements: who is responsible, the time frame that clean up is to be completed, and arrange a final “walk-through” for owner approval.

12. **Location fees are negotiable.** Owner should feel comfortable with amount agreed upon.
There is generally no standard fee scale
13. Owner may request and negotiate a security deposit.
14. Owner should have agreed upon specifics in writing. A principal or agent of the production company should sign this contract.
15. Owner may request a set of “before” pictures of any interiors, exteriors, and landscape before filming begins.
16. Owner should get a certificate of insurance, including a hold harmless clause for protection in case of personal injury on the property from the production company. (All production companies should carry insurance policies that cover third-party rentals for property damage and liability). A copy of the insurance certificate should be given to the property owner before any crew comes on the property.

For additional information or specific questions, contact the film commission:

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