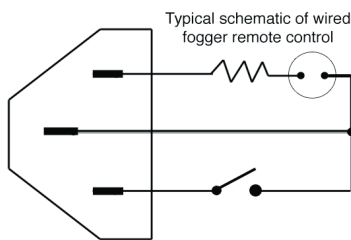


FOGGER CONTROL

For some time now, I have seen questions on forums and I have seen incomplete or sometimes incorrect information on various websites with regard to controlling a fogger with a timer, a prop controller or a wireless remote. Since many haunters want to do this and because dangerously high voltages are (usually) involved, it is time to clear up the mystery.

Generally speaking, a fogger is a very simple device consisting of a heater, a thermostat (mechanical or electronic), a small pump and a tank of fluid. A typical wired control consists of a neon bulb (with resistor) that indicates when the heater is up to temperature and a momentary pushbutton that causes fog to be created by pumping a small amount of fog juice onto the heater to be vaporized when pressed. Control circuits in some high end commercial units are a bit more complex, but that's the exception rather than the rule.



Contrary to popular belief, a fogger cannot be controlled by simply switching the AC power on and off as power must be maintained to keep the heater up to temperature. Fog is created only when power is applied to the pump,

which typically requires very low current, but (in most cases) it does operate from AC mains power, so extreme caution must be taken when connecting any type of wireless remote, prop controller or timer to control your fogger.



Our solutions work with all foggers sold by Lights Alive and with the most other products on the market that are equipped with a wired remote using an IEC connector as pictured. If your fogger has a different type of connector, it's still possible to control it as we describe, but a bit of research will be required regarding the connector. Here are the four types of control that are easily achievable.

BASIC TRIGGER CONTROL – Someone steps on a pressure mat, walks through an IR beam or otherwise triggers a microMANTIS (or equivalent) single event timer. You set how long after the trigger signal is received before the fog begins, how long the fog lasts and how long after the trigger is cleared before it can fog again. Fog erupts for one predetermined amount of time, then nothing happens until the next trigger is received.

ADVANCED TRIGGER CONTROL – Someone steps on a pressure mat, walks through an IR beam or otherwise triggers a miniMANTIS (or equivalent) programmable event controller configured in the repeat mode. Combinations of long and short bursts of fog (as programmed by you) continue for the entire time the trigger is active.



WIRELESS REMOTE CONTROL – The fogger (or foggers) are connected to a MANTISrt 4-channel wireless remote control unit. Each channel of the MANTISrt can be configured by Lights-Alive to be a momentary switch or it can latch on/off. This means that up to four foggers can be connected and the actor simply presses a tiny remote button at a range of up to 1,000' from the MANTISrt and the fog continues as long as the button is depressed. Or if continuous fog is required, the MANTIS RT can be connected to a microMANTIS or miniMANTIS controller, either of which is in the repeat mode. In cases where fog is backlit, a light can also be connected to and controlled by the wireless remote. With four channels of either momentary or latching remote control available, the possible configurations of foggers, controllers and lights is limited only by your needs and imagination.





FOGGER TIMER WITHOUT TRIGGER – Yet another method of fogger control involves a dedicated fogger timer without the sophisticated digital controls and without the ability to connect a trigger. If your only need is to keep fog rolling in for a few seconds at prescribed intervals, a basic fogger timer may be all that you need. You won't be able to trigger fog when someone approaches a sensor, but this type of timer is sometimes appropriate for situations such as fog chillers in a graveyard scene.



Lights Alive Fogger Control Cable

As mentioned earlier, connecting most fogger control circuits exposes you to high voltages and therefore extreme care must be exercised. Never plug the fogger control cable into the fogger until the other end is securely connected to the controller. There is no big mystery to fogger control once you understand the basic concept. The hardest part is finding an appropriate cable and controllers. Listed below are some items that may help you with your fogger control project.

The fogger control cable may be found at: http://www.lights-alive.com/sfx_foggers.html#cabl

For Mantis controllers and Intelligent Sensors, go to: http://www.lights-alive.com/ctrl_mantis.html

Compatible foggers and accessories are located at: http://www.lights-alive.com/sfx_foggers.html

Other triggers are here: http://www.lights-alive.com/ctrl_sensors.html

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