

Providence Fire Prevention

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Providence Fire Department

Since 1854

POSTING A FIRE WATCH

A Fire Watch is a physical inspection conducted when a building's fire alarm, sprinkler or other suppression systems, are temporarily out of service. Posting of a Fire Watch is the responsibility of the building owner or their designated representative, which may include tenants or construction superintendents. Fire Watch personnel are required to continually patrol the facility for evidence of smoke, fire, or any abnormal conditions. Whenever a life-threatening situation is discovered, the fire watch personnel must immediately contact emergency personnel (via 911), and then alert the occupants and assist in the orderly evacuation of the facility.

REQUIREMENTS:

N.F.P.A. 101 Life Safety Code requires that a Fire Watch be instituted anytime a sprinkler system, fire alarm, or other suppression system is out of service. Additionally, the Office of the Fire Marshal (O.F.M.) must be contacted through COMMUNICATIONS and advised that a system is out of service and a fire watch has been posted. NOTE: Whenever a fire pump is out of service O.F.M. must be contacted to establish the acceptable level of protection that shall be provided, such as having a fire engine perform standby. When utilized the engine crew will make hose connections to the system F.D.C. and hydrant in preparation for supplementing system water pressure and flow. This is in addition to the required Fire Watch being posted.

SELECTING FIRE WATCH PERSONNEL:

Competent, responsible, and able bodied-individuals shall be selected to conduct Fire Watches. Typically, hired security guards, or maintenance personnel and managers who are familiar with the building make excellent choices. (May refer to NFPA 601 Guard Service in Fire Loss Prevention for additional information).

FIRE WATCH LOG:

A separate log identifying each building, or area, under the Fire Watch by name and address shall be kept. Log entries shall be made hourly at the completion of each round. Log entries shall consist of the date, the time the round was completed, a summary of what was observed, and the name and signature of the individual conducting the fire watch. The Fire Watch Log shall be kept readily accessible for review by the Fire Marshal.

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DUTIES OF FIRE WATCH PERSONNEL:

Individuals who are selected for Fire Watch details shall be briefed so as to have a thorough understanding of the purpose and responsibilities of their assignment. Procedures and instructions given shall be specific with respect to actions required. They shall also have a basic understanding of the location, function, and normal status of the fire alarm and sprinkler systems, including fire pumps. Fire Watch personnel shall conduct hourly rounds by walking throughout the entire building or affected area, looking for evidence of smoke, fire, or any abnormal conditions. The specific route shall be laid out so that the Fire Watch person is required to pass through the entire area to be covered. Where special circumstances exist, such as the presence of exceptional hazards or large areas, additional patrols may be required by the Fire Marshal. Individuals selected shall know the location and operation of all portable fire extinguishers on site.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS:

The individual conducting the Fire Watch shall be equipped with a cell phone for prompt notification of emergency forces (via 911) in the case of an emergency. Alternate methods of communication (radios to security / command centers with the means to immediately dial 911) may be approved by the Fire Marshal upon request.

WRITTEN NOTIFICATION:

Written notification of intention to post a Fire Watch when planned, or the actual posting of a Fire Watch necessitated by an unplanned event, shall be forwarded to O.F.M. This correspondence shall be put on the official letterhead of the business, general contractor, or subcontractor assuming responsibility for the detail. The letter shall specify the business name and address; the buildings or portions thereof affected; the purpose of the Fire Watch (i.e.-fire alarm, sprinkler, or other suppression systems out of service); the dates and times these systems will be nonfunctional and the Fire Watch will be in effect; the qualifications of the individual(s) selected; and the specific type of communication device they will have immediately available (i.e.-Cell phone or portable radio)

DURING T.C.O. PERIODS:

If, at anytime during a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (T.C.O.) a required fire alarm, sprinkler, or other suppression system is taken out of service for more than 4 hours, a Fire Watch must be instituted. Additionally, the Office of the Fire Marshal shall immediately be notified of this. All T.C.O. requests shall include a written agreement to follow this practice.