



FIRE WATCH

Definition

Fire watch is a temporary measure intended to ensure continuous and systematic surveillance of a building or portion thereof by one or more qualified individuals for the purposes of identifying and controlling fire hazards, detecting early signs of unwanted fire, raising an alarm of fire and notifying the fire department. (CFC Section 202)

Requirements

A fire watch is required with the following occurrences:

- failure or disconnection of a fire protection system,
- an excessive number of accidental activations or nuisance alarms,
- fire protection systems are in a trouble or supervisory mode for **more than eight hours**.

A nuisance alarm is defined as "any alarm caused by mechanical failure, malfunction, improper installation, or lack of proper maintenance, or any alarm activated by a cause that cannot be determined." (2002 NFPA 72, 3.3.5-1).

During a fire watch period, the Fire Department requires that the building owner, property manager or tenant provide a fire watch until the system is repaired and placed back in service. Personnel to conduct the fire watch are determined and provided by the building owner. A professional security company is not required.

Responsibility

The building owner, property manager, tenant, or person in charge of the building or premises shall assign to the fire watch as many personnel as required, and shall instruct fire watch personnel as to:

1. The approved procedure for notifying the fire department. (CFC Section 901.7)
2. The area to be patrolled.
3. A method of alerting building occupants on evacuation procedures. When two or more fire watch personnel are required, two-way radios are required to facilitate communication and evacuation.

4. A procedure shall be provided for reactivating sprinkler valves in the event of a fire which required the sprinkler system to be taken out of service, and any other instruction required.

Documentation

1. The building owner, property manager, tenant, or person in charge of the building or premises shall provide a log book consisting of a directory of names with telephone numbers and other information to make emergency calls, calls to key management personnel, and forms to record patrols.
2. The log book shall be maintained on the premises and be available for inspection by the San Luis Obispo County Fire Department.

Duty Requirements

Assigned fire watch personnel shall:

1. Identify any fire, life or property hazards and if a hazard is discovered call 9-1-1 with the exact address and type of emergency.
2. Notify occupants of the facility of the need to evacuate. If the sirens or public address function of the alarm system are still functional, use them to assist with evacuation of the building.
3. The fire watch will not perform firefighting duties beyond the scope of the ordinary citizen.
4. Notify monitoring company and *CAL FIRE*/San Luis Obispo County Fire Department when system is taken out of service and when it is placed back in service.
5. Fire watch personnel cannot have other duties besides their assigned fire watch. However, the Fire Department may designate other duties.
6. Familiarize themselves with the area they are patrolling.
7. Perform patrol operations according to instructions and local fire department.
8. Patrol their designated area at least once each hour.
9. Record patrol rounds and any other significant information in the log book.
10. Relay any special orders or pertinent information to relief personnel and management.
11. Remain on duty until properly relieved.
12. Check the entire building hourly, including all rooms, basements and penthouses.

Cancellation

Fire Watch can only be terminated by approval of the fire department after confirming all fire protection systems have been fully restored and are operational. This includes verification of the monitoring company on line and operational status of system.