



NORTHSTAR FIRE DEPARTMENT



Fire Watch – Guidelines

Fire Prevention Guideline P-19

PURPOSE

To provide an outline identifying the requirements for a Fire Watch. The items listed are basic information only. Additional requirements may apply.

Failure to meet these guidelines can cause the local AHJ to impose fines or require building evacuations until Fire Watch conditions are resolved.

SCOPE

A property is rarely more vulnerable to catastrophic fire loss than when a fire protection system or a portion of a system is out of order. Whether the impairment is caused by an emergency situation such as a ruptured pipe or is part of preplanned repairs, testing, or maintenance doesn't matter. If either the fire sprinkler system or fire alarm system goes down for more than four hours in a 24-hour period, NFPA 101 Section 9 and CFC requires either the building to be evacuated or a Fire Watch to be established.

REQUIREMENTS

A Fire Watch consists of one or more trained personnel charged with maintaining life safety by continuously patrolling all areas of a property affected by an impairment or other fire watch condition. If smoke, fire, or other abnormal conditions are spotted, the fire watcher must immediately contact emergency personnel, alert building occupants, and help evacuate the building.

1. The Northstar Fire Department is first to be notified of the equipment failure and then, a Fire Watch will be required.
2. The Fire Watch must be maintained until the fire alarm and/or sprinkler systems have returned to service.
3. The personnel performing the Fire Watch (Fire Watchers) shall:
 - 3.1 Continually patrol the area, structure or facility and document the patrol a minimum of once every hour. (A Fire Watcher's responsibility does not only encompass occupied areas of a building. They must also check unoccupied areas such as storage rooms, crawl spaces, and concealed places.)
 - 3.2 Immediately address any hazards that are discovered.
 - 3.3 Make sure there's adequate means of egress and remove any obstructions.
 - 3.4 Make sure other alarm systems are functioning properly.
 - 3.5 Be capable of communicating with building occupants and the fire department to notify them about fires or other emergencies.
 - 3.6 Be trained in the use of a fire extinguisher and have one accessible at all times.
 - 3.7 Know the location of manual fire alarm stations and understand the sequence of events required for fire response and sounding alarms.

