

Purpose:

- ◆ This brochure provides information to clarify Hanover County Fire-EMS requirements for a fire watch.

Scope:

- ◆ This information applies to all facilities located in Hanover County and Hanover County Fire-EMS personnel when a required Fire Protection system is out of service.

Introduction:

- ◆ A fire watch is the action of an on-site person whose sole responsibility is to watch for the occurrence of fire. The facility owner or representative in cooperation with Hanover County Fire-EMS will determine the personnel who will conduct the fire watch.

Procedures:

A fire watch shall be established whenever one or more of the following conditions exists:

- ◆ The Fire Suppression Sprinkler system is out of service or a section of the system is out of service.
- ◆ The Fire Detection system / Fire Alarm system is out of service or a section / zone is out of service.
- ◆ When Fire Protection system notification to the central station monitoring service is disrupted.
- ◆ When an excessive number of accidental activations or nuisance alarms have occurred. 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 cause that cannot be determined.*” (96 NFPA 72 1-4).
- ◆ When a Fire Marshal or Fire Officer of Hanover County Fire-EMS determines that a situation requires the establishment of a fire watch.

Procedures cont’d:

- ◆ Anytime a required Fire Protection system is out of service the facility shall either be evacuated or an approved fire watch shall be provided for all occupants left unprotected by the shutdown until the Fire Protection system has been returned to service.

Owner Responsibilities:

- ◆ Establish, instruct and maintain fire watch personnel.
- ◆ Notify Hanover County Fire-EMS that the system is not in service and again when the system has been repaired, tested and is back in-service. A licensed technician shall do the back-in-service notification.
- ◆ Contract a repair company to fix the Fire Protection system (s).
- ◆ Maintain a log of fire watch activities.
- ◆ Notify all facility occupants of the following:
 - The facility Fire Alarm system is not in service.
 - Fire Alarm system is being tested.
 - Once the Fire Alarm system is back in service.

Fire Watch Requirements:

When a Fire Protection system is out of service an Impairment Coordinator is required.

- ◆ They must be a minimum of 18 Years Old
- ◆ One for each floor that is affected by the lack of fire protection or hazard
- ◆ Fire Watch is their sole responsibility and they must be mentally alert.
- ◆ They must have at least one means of notifying 911 and be able to effectively communicate in spoken English.
- ◆ Familiar with the structure’s layout and evacuation procedures
- ◆ Must be able to climb stairs that may be a part of the facility or area placed under the fire watch. Conduct and walk of the area every 30 minutes and document the event

Fire Watch Requirements: cont’d

- ◆ Must be able to recognize the indicators of fire through the senses of sight, hearing, smell and touch.
- ◆ Must understand how to operate and be able to use a fire extinguisher.

Fire Watch Duties:

- ◆ Prompt discovery of fire and notifications of Hanover County Fire-EMS with address, exact location and type of emergency.
- ◆ Conduct periodic patrols, every thirty minutes, of the entire fire watch area as specified including an inspection of the outside perimeter of the building.
- ◆ Identify any fire, life or property hazards

Record Keeping:

- ◆ A fire watch log shall be maintained at the facility. The log must be available to the Hanover County Fire-EMS department at all times during the fire watch as well as following the fire watch for records verification.
- ◆ The log should record the following information:
 - Facility name & address.
 - Name & contact information of person conducting the fire watch.
 - Date & Times that the patrol has been completed for each tour along with any comments.

Cancellation of the Fire Watch:

Once the Fire Protection system (s) are restored and test have been conducted to verify affected systems are operational, the fire watch can be cancelled and the following shall be notified:

- ◆ Owner or representative
- ◆ Fire Alarm monitoring company
- ◆ Hanover Emergency Communications
- ◆ Hanover County Office of the Fire Marshal
- ◆ Facility occupants

