

CHARLESTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Marshal Division

Information Bulletin

Fire Alarm System Temporarily Out of Service



Removing Fire Alarm from Service:

The Charleston County Consolidated Dispatch Center is required to dispatch units to investigate a fire alarm once a call is received from an alarm company. Anytime a fire alarm system is removed from service the facility must notify *their* alarm monitoring service company to place the alarm on test so that the alarm company does not transmit the alarm to 911. The communications center cannot disregard an alarm unless fire personnel are on site standing by with the system.

Facility Responsibility:

Once an alarm system has malfunctioned or a device has activated and cannot be reset, the facility must contact their alarm company or service representative immediately and ask for a technician to respond. The facility management must clearly understand that it is their responsibility to promptly correct any problems with the alarm system.

Until the alarm is repaired, the facility shall utilize a Fire Watch to monitor the conditions of the building in accordance with International Fire Code.

Fire Watch:

Whenever a facility must remove a required alarm system from service, a fire watch must be established. The facility must appoint an individual(s) to monitor the building. The only duties of the fire watch shall be to monitor the building for emergency conditions, notify 911, and initiate evacuation. This is important for every occupancy, but extremely important for critical occupancies such as Assembly, Residential, Day Care, School, or Hospital/Care facilities.

Please notify the Charleston Fire Department when a system is taken off line for more than four (4) hours for a planned impairment or more than two (2) hours for an unplanned impairment.