



CHARLESTON FIRE DEPARTMENT



Fire Marshal Division

Information Bulletin

Fire Watch

The information contained within this document is intended to offer guidance for a facility or business that incurs impairment to a life safety system. When a required fire protection system (fire alarm, fire sprinkler, or other life safety system) is out of service **for any duration** the building shall either be evacuated or an approved Fire Watch shall be initiated. This document is intended to outline the minimum parameters of an acceptable Fire Watch. Additional requirements may be found in the International Fire Code or may be required by your insurance provider.

Responsibility:

- 1) It is the responsibility of the owner, occupant, or senior staff member in charge of a facility to provide for the safety of their employees, customers, or guests.
- 2) Every facility shall appoint an Impairment Coordinator who is responsible for complying with this document and the requirements outlined within the International Fire Code. In the absence of a specific designee the senior member of staff assumes this responsibility.
- 3) The Impairment Coordinator shall ensure Fire Watch's are properly trained and equipped, appropriate policies and procedures are in place, and proper documentation is maintained.
- 4) The Impairment Coordinator shall notify staff of the Fire Watch condition.
- 5) The Fire Marshal shall be notified of any impairment that will last longer than 4 hours by calling 720-1981. The Fire Marshal will again be notified upon restoration of the system.
- 6) A Fire Watch log (example on page 2 of this document or similar) shall be completed for each impairment. Upon restoration of the system the document(s) shall be faxed to the Fire Marshal at 720-3991. Copies must be maintained on the premises.
- 7) Any alarm system taken "off-line" must be done so by contacting your alarm monitoring company. Contacting the 911 center or the Fire Department is not sufficient.

When to implement a Fire Watch:

- 1) Planned or unplanned impairments of fire protection systems.
- 2) During hot work such as welding, spark, or heat producing work in a building.

Fire Watch role and responsibility:

- 1) Must be equipped with a cell phone or radio to directly notifying 911 of an emergency.
- 2) Their only duty is to perform constant patrols of the premises and keep watch for fire.
- 3) In an emergency the Fire Watch shall contact 911 and begin immediate evacuations.
- 4) Maintain a log of patrols and any unsafe conditions observed during their patrols.
- 5) Fire watch must be continued until the system is restored.

Contact the Charleston Fire Department Fire Marshal Division at (843)724-3429 with any questions, comments, or concerns.

FIRE WATCH LOG 12 Hour Form

Facility Information	
Facility Name:	Address:
Impairment Coordinator:	Phone:
Date of Impairment:	Impairment start time:
Reason for and description of impairment:	

Pre-Impairment Checklist	
	The extent and expected duration of the impairment have been determined.
	The areas or buildings involved have been inspected and the increased risks determined.
	Recommendations have been submitted to management or building owner/manager.
	The insurance carrier, the alarm company, building owner/manager, and Fire Marshal have been notified.
	The supervisors in the areas to be affected have been notified.

Areas shall be evaluated for the following during continuous patrols of the premises	
1 Odor of smoke or visual signs of fire.	4 Exits are marked, visible, and unobstructed.
2 Adequate firefighting equipment (fire extinguishers).	5 Perimeter is secured to prevent unauthorized entry.
3 Trash or debris that is present a fire or escape hazard.	6 Unsafe conditions that could lead to a fire.

Fire Watch log of activities during impairment		
Fire Watch Name	Time	Notes on Conditions (If clear enter "OK")

System Restoration	
System restored: <input type="radio"/> Yes, completed section below <input type="radio"/> No, continue fire watch on a new 12 hour form	
Time Restored:	Signature of person verifying restoration:
Notes:	

Completed forms must be maintained on site. Upon restoration of the system completed forms should be faxed to the Charleston Fire Department Fire Marshal Division at (843) 720-5857 or emailed to CFD@Charleston-sc.gov.