



Washington Township Fire Department Prevention Bureau

Fire Watch Guidance

What is a Fire Watch?

According to the National Fire Protection Association, a fire watch is the assignment of a person or persons to an area for the express purpose of notifying the fire department, the building occupants, or both of an emergency; preventing a fire from occurring; extinguishing small fires, or protecting the public from fire or life safety dangers. A fire watch should consist of trained personnel who continuously patrol the affected area. Ready access to fire extinguishers and the ability to promptly notify the fire department are important items to consider. During the patrol of the area, the person should not only be looking for fire but making sure that the other fire protection features of the building such as egress routes and alarm systems are available and functioning properly.

A fire watch may be required for any of the following reasons:

- A fire alarm system fully or partially out of service.
- A sprinkler system fully or partially out of service.
- A failure of the building fire pump or emergency generator that controls life safety functions.
- Other conditions as required to maintain life safety systems.

Owner Responsibilities:

1. Notify the Fire Department that the system is not working and again when the system has been repaired.
2. Contact a licensed contractor to repair the system and attain any required permits.
3. Establish, instruct, and maintain fire watch personnel.
4. Train fire watch personnel to ensure that they are knowledgeable about the property being protected, including the following:
 - a. Floor layout of all buildings, floors, occupancies, and hazards
 - b. Hazardous materials and processes, if any, and location of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
 - c. Emergency shutdown procedures and equipment
 - d. Fixed fire protection systems
 - e. Manual and automatic detection and alarm systems
 - f. Portable fire protection equipment
 - g. Facility emergency action plan and procedures
 - h. Any construction operations

Fire Watch Duties:

Persons serving as a fire watch cannot have any other duties except the fire watch.

Fire watch duties will consist of the following:

1. Conduct hourly patrols of the affected areas and maintain a record of the fire watch for inspection by the Washington Township Fire Department Prevention Bureau.
2. Be trained in the use of a fire extinguisher and have one accessible at all times.
3. Identify any fire, signs of fire, life, or property hazards.
4. Knowledge of building floor layout, hazardous areas, emergency shut down procedures, emergency evacuation



plans, etc.

5. Check all exits and exit access corridors to ensure means of egress are clear and unobstructed.
6. Check sprinkler system valves are in the open position, if applicable.
7. Check for any smoking violations or other sources of ignition.
8. The fire watch must have at least one means of direct communication with the Fire Department. (a cell phone is acceptable)
9. If a fire is discovered, the fire watch must first notify the Fire Department immediately by calling 9-1-1 and giving the exact address and location of the fire.
10. The fire watch personnel must then notify occupants of the need to evacuate. If the fire alarm horns or public address system are still functional, use them to notify occupants. If appliances are not functional, then other means of notification must be available (i.e., bull horns).
11. Have knowledge of the location and use of fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers. (The fire watch will not perform fire-fighting duties beyond the scope of ordinary citizens)
12. Maintain a log of fire watch activity.

Frequency of Patrols

Fire watch personnel shall patrol the entire area affected every 60 minutes. In large buildings, additional fire watch personnel shall be assigned in order to achieve the required frequency.

Record Keeping

A fire watch log shall be maintained at the building. The log must be available to the Fire Department at all times during the fire watch. The log should contain the following information:

1. Address of the building.
2. Date and time of each patrol through the affected area.
3. Name of person(s) conducting fire watch.
4. Records of communications with the Fire Department and licensed contractor doing the repairs.
5. Other information as required by the Fire Department. (i.e., equipment, inspection logbooks)

The completed daily fire watch log must be delivered to the Washington Township Fire Department Prevention Bureau at 6200 Eiterman Road, Dublin, Ohio 43016 every day, or emailed to prevention@wtwp.com.

It is the responsibility of the owner, or their representative, to contact the Washington Township Fire Department Prevention Bureau once the fire protection systems are repaired or the hazard has been mitigated. After the Fire Department has confirmed that systems requiring the fire watch are fully operational, then the Fire Department will terminate the fire watch. The Prevention Bureau can be reached at 614-652-3920 Option 1.