

CHAPTER X INSPECTION DUTIES

Subject 5 Establishment of Fire Watches and Notification of Impairments

1005.01 Objective

- A. To outline procedures for the establishment of fire watches in the City of Cincinnati as defined in the Ohio Fire Code (OFC) section (7) 901.7
- B. To outline procedures for members of the Cincinnati Fire Department who will serve as Fire Watch Personnel
- C. To outline procedures for members of the Cincinnati Fire Department who serve as Fire Watch Personnel

1005.03 Scope

- A. The establishment of fire watches and notification of impairments in this procedure shall occur when fire protection system fails, are out of service, demolition/additions to a building occur, there have been an excessive number of preventable activations or nuisance alarms.

1005.05 Definitions

- A. Fire Watch- A temporary measure intended to ensure continuous and systematic inspection of an occupied building or portion thereof by one or more qualified individuals for the purpose of identifying and controlling fire hazards, detecting early signs of unwanted fire, raising an alarm of fire and notifying the fire department.
- B. Impairments- Where a required fire protection system is out of service, thus impairment is the state of being diminished, weakened, or damaged.
- C. Fire Protection System- Fire Alarm, Sprinkler or Standpipe System

1005.07 Fire Watch Requirements

- A. If a fire protection system fails, is out of service, demolition/additions to a building occur, there have been an excessive number of preventable activations or nuisance alarms, a building owner (or their representative) may be required by the Fire Department to provide a fire watch until the system is repaired. If the building is occupied a fire watch is mandatory.

1005.09

Fire Watch Establishment

- A. Company Officers discovering Fire Alarms, Sprinkler or Standpipe Systems out of service in occupied structures or structures that will be occupied soon thereafter shall assure Fire Watches are established in accordance with the Ohio Fire Code Section 901.7 “Systems out of Service”. When establishing fire watches, company officers will meet with the owner or his representative and explain the fire watch requirements as outlined in this section of the Procedure Manual. In addition, such officers are to secure a written agreement with the owner or his representative using the Cincinnati Fire Department’s “Fire Watch Agreement” form located on the All CFD Drive in the folder labeled Fire Watch. The Fire Watch folder contains a sample watch agreement, a blank fire watch agreement and a sample fire watch log. A copy of the established fire watch agreement and a copy of the fire watch log are to be given to the owner or his representative. Fire Companies are to carry the documents on their apparatus for use in the field.
- B. Fire Officers who are unable to establish written fire watch agreements with property owners, whose structures are occupied are to call the Fire Communication Center and request a Fire Prevention Fire Specialist respond to their location to handle the matter. The assigned Fire Specialist will thereafter be responsible for securing the fire watch agreement and assuring the defective system is returned to service.
- C. In Impairment cases when a Fire Specialist is not called to the scene, such as when the structure is not occupied, the fire company officer will ensure the Fire Department is notified of the situation by means of departmental email, teletype messaging and submit a premise history if the impairment is projected to last beyond the officer’s tour of duty. In addition, fire company officers are to continue the CFD’s Standard Operation Procedure of notifying the owner or his representative of impairments if they are not on the scene by calling a Key Holder, etc.
- D. When impairments are handled by Fire Specialists or in a rare occasion by another member of Fire Prevention, such members will also notify the CFD of the situation by means of departmental email, teletype and submitting a premise history if the impairment is projected to last more than 24 hours.
- E. The District Chief of the District experiencing the situation is also to be briefed by the person in charge. The Fire Prevention Bureau will follow up on all defective required fire protection systems, assuring that the systems are working properly. Fire Companies are not to be used to handle such matters.

- F. Personnel utilized to conduct the fire watch are individuals who are able bodied having the capacity to fulfill the fire watch duties. The individual or Individuals sole duty is to watch for the occurrence of fire or other emergencies.
- G. A professional security company may not always be needed, but may be required by the Fire Department when life safety conditions warrant such action. In extreme situations, the Fire Department can order the owner to hire Cincinnati Fire Department members to carry out fire watch duties. An example of such would be an owner that fails to carry out the terms of a fire watch agreement.
- H. In general, one individual should be able to carry out fire watch duties for three floors within 20 minutes. In larger more complex structures there may be a need to reduce the 20 minute coverage to one individual for two floors. For more complex structures, seek the direction of a member of Fire Prevention may be applicable.
- I. The number of personnel involved in the fire watch must be adequate to ensure each floor, level, and room of the fire area is to be covered. All common areas, public corridors, stairwells, storage/locker rooms, mechanical/machinery rooms, electrical, boiler and other fuel fired appliance rooms, parking garages, service rooms and offices are to be patrolled during the Fire Watch and within the 20 minute time frame.
- J. In order to accomplish the Fire Watch Establishment Objectives:
 - 1. Know what is impaired
 - 2. Know who the responsible party is
 - 3. Know the building use
 - 4. Know the size of the structure
 - 5. Know if the building will be occupied during the impairment
 - 6. Estimate the time the impairment will last
 - 7. Determine the number of individuals needed to carry out fire watch duties

1005.11

FIRE WATCH PERSONNEL DUTIES

- A. Fire watch personnel are to keep diligent watch for fires in the areas affected. The person or persons performing the fire watch are not permitted to perform any other duties. Each floor of an impacted building shall be patrolled every 20 minutes on a 24 hour basis until the fire alarm and/or fire protection system has been restored to normal operating condition.
- B. Fire watch personnel are to be familiar with facilities and procedures for sounding an alarm in the event of a fire and have a means of notifying the Emergency Services.

- C. Fire watch personnel shall identify any fire, life or property hazard. If they discover smoke or fire, fire watch personnel must:
1. Pull the nearest pull station if system is working or continuously sound the airhorn that is required if the fire alarm will not annunciate.
 2. While exiting the building radio in the following: the presence of a fire, what floor it is on and any other pertinent information to individuals that are also performing fire watch duties. The individual at the base of the structure near a phone will call 911 from that location unless such area is impacted by the emergency. In the case of a Cincinnati fire watch detail the member in charge of the detail will call the Cincinnati Communication Center informing them of the emergency. In all incidents 911/ Fire Dispatch shall be called by a member of the fire watch team.
 3. Fire watch personnel are not to put themselves in jeopardy.
 4. Fire watch personnel shall carry cell phones to communicate with 911 Operators and others.
 5. Fire watch personnel shall carry signaling devices to alert any occupants of the presence of alarm, fire or other hazardous condition.
 6. Fire watch personnel shall carry a Cincinnati Fire Department radio to communicate with all Fire Watch personnel and any additional equipment that is needed to carryout their fire watch duties.
 7. Fire watch personnel shall maintain a log of fire watch activities, and shall record their activities in ink. The logs will be maintained by the building owner until he is relieved of fire watch duties.
 8. All members are required to complete the Cincinnati Fire Department Annual Centrelearn Fire Watch Training.