

This information is provided to clarify the requirements for a fire watch. A fire watch is the action of an on-site person whose sole duty is to watch for the occurrence of fire.

Fire Watch Requirements

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 West Richland Building Department & Benton County Fire District # 4 to provide a fire watch until the system is repaired. Personnel to conduct the fire watch are determined by the building owner. Note: A professional security company may not always be needed, but may be required by West Richland Building Department and Benton County Fire District # 4 when life safety conditions warrant such action.

*A nuisance alarm is defined as “any alarm caused by mechanical failure, malfunction, improper maintenance, or any alarm activation by a cause that cannot be determined.” (NFPA 72, 3.3.7.1)

Owner Responsibilities

- a) Establish, instruct and maintain fire watch personnel.
- b) Notify the monitoring company.
- c) Follow the West Richland Building Department and Benton County Fire District # 4’s Impairment procedures located in the Impairment/Fire Watch handout.
- d) Contact a service company to repair the fire protection system(s).
- e) Notify the City Building Department and Benton County Fire District # 4 when the system has been repaired.

Fire Watch Duties

Personnel serving as a fire watch have the following duties:

- a) Conduct periodic patrols of the entire facility as specified.

- b) Identify any fire, life or property hazards.
- c) Notify Benton County Fire District # 4 if a fire is discovered by calling 9-1-1 with the exact address and type of emergency.
- d) Notify occupants of the facility of the need to evacuate. If the sirens or public address function of the alarm system are still functional, use them to assist with the evacuation.
- e) Determine at least one means of communication with the Fire District. A telephone is acceptable.
- f) Maintain a log of the fire watch activities.
- g) Have knowledge of the location and use of fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers.
- h) Fire Watch Personnel can not have other duties besides their assigned fire watch. However, the Fire District may designate other duties.

Note:

The fire watch will not perform fire-fighting duties beyond the scope of the ordinary citizen.

Frequency of Inspections

Fire watch personnel shall patrol the entire facility every 15 minutes in the following situations:

- a) The facility has people sleeping.
- b) The facility is an institutional occupancy.
- c) The facility is an occupied assembly occupancy.

Facilities that do not meet the requirements for a 15 minute patrol frequency should have a fire watch patrol every 30 minutes. If a facility can not be completely patrolled by a fire watch person in 15 or 30 minutes, extra personnel shall be assigned fire watch duties to assure that the complete facility is patrolled in the required time frame.

Record Keeping

A fire watch log shall be maintained at the facility. The log must be available to the West Richland Building Department & Benton County Fire District # 4 at all times during the fire watch.

The log shall show the following:

- a) Address of the facility
- b) Times that the patrol has completed each tour of the facility.
- c) Name of the person conducting the fire watch.
- d) Record of the communication(s) to the City Building Department, Benton County Fire District # 4 and the monitoring company.
- e) Record of other information as directed by the Fire Department personnel.

Sample Fire Log

12345 Main Street		
Time	Watch Person	Notes
12:00	Jim Dough	Started Watch
12:15	Jim Dough	
12:30	John Smith	Maintenance arrived

Cancellation of Fire Watch

A fire watch shall be maintained until released by the West Richland Building Department & Benton County Fire Dist # 4. Upon release, it is the owner's responsibility to cancel the fire watch. Once the fire watch has been cancelled, the owner or representative must notify the monitoring company and the West Richland Building Department.

For additional information regarding Impairment/ Fire Watch requirements contact the West Richland Building Department 509-967-5902.