



CLINTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Marshal's Office

FIRE WATCH REQUIREMENTS

Whenever a fire protection system (fire alarm, fire sprinkler, etc.) is taken out of service for maintenance or repairs, or is otherwise compromised due to damage and unable to function as intended, a "fire watch" must be put in place. This applies anytime the system is off line for more than four (4) hours in a twenty-four (24) hour period. When a fire watch is required the following actions shall be taken by the facility manager/administrator for that business, facility or building:

1. If the fire alarm system has activated, and it is a monitored system (i.e. through an alarm company's central station), the Fire Department is notified and will respond with a fire crew to assess the situation. If the system won't reset and it becomes necessary to take the alarm system out of service - for whatever reason (maintenance, repairs, damage, mechanical or electronic problems) - a fire watch will be required. Repair work may only be performed by a state licensed fire alarm contractor.
2. If the fire sprinkler system has activated the Fire Department will respond with a fire crew to assess the situation. If it is not an actual fire situation chances are a fire sprinkler head and/or a water supply pipe has been damaged. This could be caused by mechanical damage but is often the result of unprotected pipe or heads exposed to below freezing temperatures. Once the water has been shut off the sprinkler system will be out of service. A fire watch will be needed until it is restored. Repair work may only be performed by a state licensed fire sprinkler contractor.
3. If a hazardous condition or situation exists on your property a fire watch may be needed until the hazardous condition is properly mitigated. The Fire Department will inform you when a fire watch is needed.
4. Fire watches are intended to be temporary, lasting only for the duration of time the fire protection system is out of service. Fire watch may last for hours or in rare cases for days depending on the circumstances. These systems must be restored to service as soon as possible.
5. Facility managers/administrators (i.e. property managers, building maintenance or security staff) are responsible for implementing fire watches, staffing the fire watch and keeping the documentation for each watch period.
6. Fire watch shall be performed by individuals who are capable of performing all functions of a fire watch as defined in this document. Their primary responsibility shall be fire watch duty. It shall be the responsibility of management to ensure that fire watch personnel are qualified, equipped and knowledgeable of their responsibilities.
7. Fire watch personnel shall be responsible and have a means of identifying themselves as authorized representatives of the facility (name badge, vest, cap, etc.).
8. Each route in and around the building (or area) to be covered by fire watch personnel shall be designated by the facility manager at the direction of the Fire Department.
9. Fire watch routes shall be explicitly defined to ensure that the fire watch personnel patrols the correct area. The fire watch personnel shall be provided with instructions, all details regarding the route, the functions to be carried out in covering the route and reporting of fires or other emergencies. Large buildings may require more than one fire watch person.

FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

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10. Fire watch shall be maintained continuously. Fire watch personnel shall make rounds at one (1) hour intervals. When operations in the property normally are suspended, the fire watch person shall make rounds hourly. During their rounds the fire watch personnel shall make a thorough inspection of all areas being watchful for the site or smell of smoke or fire.
11. Fire watch personnel shall carry a reliable communication device such as a cell phone or a portable radio to promptly report any problems. Emergency calls should be made to 911 stating clearly where the problem is (building address, suite number or area) and what the problem is (fire, smell of smoke, medical emergency, etc.). If the building is occupied the fire watch shall alert those inside to evacuate (a whistle or small air horn would be suggested). During hours of darkness fire watches should also carry a good quality flashlight.
12. Fire watch personnel shall sign a log sheet (see attached) which shall be maintained in the facility manager's office, guard desk or other central location. Log sheets shall be completed and maintained until the need for the fire watch has ended (when the system has been restored and operational). Copies of log sheets shall be made and submitted in person, or by email, to the Sandy Springs Fire Marshal's Office (see info at bottom of first page of this memo).
13. Each facility manager/administrator shall ensure that fire watch personnel are familiar with the buildings specific emergency plans for dealing with fires and other emergencies. This includes procedures to follow in the recognition and reporting of an emergency, including:
 - a) Communications equipment available to summon aid and notify others
 - b) How to notify the building management and emergency responders
 - c) How to notify others in the building of an emergency condition.
14. Each facility manager/administrator shall ensure that:
 - a) Fire watch personnel are not permitted to change the time record charts.
 - b) The changing and review of time record charts is done by the manager/administrator or the manager/administrator's responsible designee.
 - c) Time record charts of fire watch personnel are promptly reviewed.
 - d) Files are maintained for review by the Fire Marshal's Office personnel.
 - e) All irregularities are investigated, recorded, and corrective action is taken.
15. A current and continuously updated directory of names, titles, office and cell phone numbers, email addresses and other useful information shall be maintained at a central location to assist in making emergency contacts. This directory shall include 24 hour telephone numbers of key facility personnel to be notified in an emergency (property managers, chief engineer, maintenance persons, security staff, etc.). Contact information (routine and emergency phone numbers) for persons/businesses providing service for fire protection systems (Alarm Company, Sprinkler Company, fire extinguishers, elevators, etc.) shall also be kept in this directory. *NOTE: 911 shall be called immediately to report any and all suspected or actual emergencies (fire, police or medical).*
16. Cancelling fire watch. As soon as the problem requiring the fire watch has been successfully resolved or repaired, and the system is back in service, the facility manager/administrator shall notify the Fire Department (contact info below). Upon that notification the fire watch may be discontinued. Where applicable, the facility manager/administrator must also notify the alarm monitoring company that the system has been restored and future alarm signals from that facility shall be handled appropriately. Fire watch log sheets shall be scanned and copied and then forwarded to the Fire Marshal's Office as attachments to email. Original copies of the logs shall be retained by the facility manager/administrator for one year after the fire watch ends.

Contact Information:
Clinton Fire Department - Fire Marshal's Office
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