



Fort Myers Beach Fire Control District

Life Safety Branch

100 Voorhis Street · Fort Myers Beach, Florida 33931

Phone (239) 590-4210 • Email: prevention@fmbfire.org

Fire Watch Procedures

PURPOSE: Anytime a fire protection system is out of service for more than ten (10) hours in a 24-hour period, the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) shall be permitted to require the building to be evacuated or an approved fire watch to be provided for all portions left unprotected by the fire protection system shutdown until the fire protection system has been returned to service (Florida Fire Prevention Code: NFPA 1: 13.3.3.6.5.2).

In the event of a failure of a fire protection system or an excessive number of accidental activations, the AHJ shall be permitted to require an approved fire watch until the system is repaired (Florida Fire Prevention Code: NFPA 1: 13.1.11).

SCOPE: This policy shall govern all buildings protected by fire protection systems, and equipment, however excludes one- and two-family dwellings (Florida Statute 553.79(2)).

What is a Fire Watch? 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 for fire or life safety dangers (Florida Fire Prevention Code: NFPA 101: 3.3.108).

Owner and Fire Protection Contractor Responsibilities:

1. Upon being notified of a fire protection system impairment, that is expected to be out of service for more than ten (10) hours in a 24-hour period, the owner, responsible representative, or fire protection contractor shall immediately notify the Fort Myers Beach Fire District – Life Safety Branch.
2. Reporting of a Fire Watch, during business hours, shall be made to the Life Safety Branch, 239-590-4210 or via email prevention@fmbfirefl.gov

Fire Watch Duties:

1. Have a means of communication for making contact with 9-1-1 or the fire department.
2. Be physically able to conduct periodic patrols of the interior and exterior of the entire facility.
3. Maintain a count of current occupancy levels of the structure.
4. Be able to notify occupants and establish an evacuation location for the building occupants in case of an emergency.
5. Maintain Fire Watch Log.
6. Know location of fire extinguishers, and proper method of use P.A.S.S. (Pull – Aim – Squeeze – Sweep).
7. Any individual assigned fire watch duties shall not have any other duties assigned to them, and will not engage in any firefighting above the level of an ordinary citizen.

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Actions in the Event of Fire or Odor of Smoke:

1. Immediately make contact with 9-1-1.
2. Notify all occupants in the structure, and begin evacuation (use of the fire alarm system is permitted should those portions be functional).
3. If able to, use a fire extinguisher. Remember to never turn your back to the fire or put the fire between you and your way out.
4. Upon arrival and setup of Incident Command, identify yourself and relay information pertinent to the fire and any potential occupants.
5. Conduct an occupancy count of all evacuated occupants, if there is found to be individuals who have not evacuated, immediately relay this information to the on-scene Incident Commander.

Frequency of Inspections: Fire Watch personnel shall patrol the entire facility every (15) minutes in the following situations:

1. The facility has people sleeping.
2. The facility is an educational facility or place of worship.
3. The facility is an occupied assembly occupancy.

All other structures who do not meet the above criteria for 15 minute patrol intervals shall be patrolled every 30 minutes.

Record Keeping: A Fire Watch Log must be maintained at the facility for the entire duration of the fire watch.

1. Current occupancy counts of structure.
2. Address of facility.
3. Times the patrols were conducted.
4. Name of individual(s) responsible for fire watch.
5. Record of any communication with the Fire Department or Fire Alarm System Monitoring Company.
6. Completed Fire Watch Logs must be delivered to the Life Safety Branch at 100 Voorhis Street or via email prevention@fmbfirefl.gov by 0900 the next day.

Cancellation of a Fire Watch:

1. It is the responsibility of the owner, representative, or fire protection contractor to report when the functionality of a fire protection system has been restored.
2. Upon successful restoration of any fire protection system, a member of the Life Safety Branch, may elect to conduct system functionality tests to ensure operability prior to the Fire Watch being cancelled.

REV: 12/2022

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