



## OPERATING POLICY 3 FIRE WATCH



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Kirkland Fire/Building Department • 123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 • (425) 587.3650

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### Scope

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the requirements for a fire watch, as noted in the *International Fire Code*. The following circumstances may warrant a fire watch:

- Fire protection impairments (IFC 907.1)
- Construction/demolition sites (IFC 1404.5)
- Hot work (IFC 2604.2)

### Definitions

**Fire Watch:** A temporary measure intended to ensure continuous and systematic surveillance of a building or portion thereof by one or more qualified individuals for the purposes of identifying and controlling fire hazards, detecting early signs of unwanted fire, raising an alarm of fire and notifying the fire department.

**Nuisance Alarm:** Any alarm caused by mechanical failure, malfunction, improper installation, or lack of proper maintenance, or any alarm activated by a cause that cannot be determined. (NFPA 72, 3.3.5.1)

**Hot work:** Operations including cutting, welding, brazing, soldering, grinding, thawing pipe, installation of torch-applied roof systems or any other similar activity.

### General Requirements

Personnel used to conduct the fire watch are subject to the approval of the Kirkland Fire Department. A person performing a fire watch must be literate in the English language, ambulatory and at least 21 years of age. The person performing fire watch duties shall have at least one means of direct communication with the Fire Department (a telephone is preferable) and his/her sole duty shall be to perform constant patrols and watch for the occurrence of fire. (A professional security company is not required.)

#### 1. Fire protection impairments

Where a required fire protection is out of service or during system impairment (including due to repeated nuisance alarms), a building owner or his representative may be required by the Fire Code Official to provide a fire watch until the system is repaired.

Owner responsibilities during a fire protection system outage:

- Establish, instruct and maintain fire watch personnel
- Notify the monitoring company
- Notify occupants of the building
- Contact the repair company to fix the fire alarm or fire suppression system(s)
- Notify the Kirkland Fire Department that the system is not working and again when the system has been repaired. Call the Fire Prevention Bureau at (425) 587-3650

## OPERATING POLICY NO. 3 (Continued)

Personnel serving as a fire watch have the following responsibilities:

- Conduct periodic patrols of the interior of the entire facility as specified
- Identify any fire, life or property hazards
- Maintain a log of fire watch activities (see attachment 1)
- Have knowledge of the location and use of the fire extinguishers

### 2. Construction/demolition sites

When required by the Fire Code Official for building demolition that is hazardous in nature, qualified personnel shall be provided to serve as an on-site fire watch.

### 3. Hot work

A fire watch shall be provided during hot work activities and shall continue for a minimum of 30 minutes after the conclusion of the work. The Fire Code Official, or the responsible manager under a hot work program, is authorized to extend the fire watch based on the hazards or work being performed.

Exception: Where the hot work area has no fire hazards or combustible exposures

The fire watch shall include the entire hot work area.

- Hot work conducted in areas with fire exposures that are not observable by a single individual shall have additional personnel assigned to fire watch to ensure that exposed areas are monitored.
- Individuals designated to fire watch duty shall have fire-extinguishing equipment readily available and shall be trained in the use of such equipment.
- Individuals assigned to fire watch duty shall be responsible for extinguishing spot fires and communicating an alarm.

### **Actions to be taken in case of fire or odor of smoke**

- Notify the Kirkland Fire Department if a fire is discovered by calling 9-1-1 with the exact address and type of emergency
- Notify the occupants of the facility of the need to evacuate. If the building fire alarm notification devices or public address function of the fire alarm system are still function, use them to assist with the evacuation of the building
- The fire watch shall not perform firefighting duties beyond the scope of the ordinary citizen

Exception: A person on hot-work fire watch who is specially trained in firefighting and/or extinguisher use

### **Frequency of Inspections**

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

- The facility contains sleeping, non-ambulatory, or mentally impaired persons
- The facility is an institutional occupancy
- The facility is an assembly occupancy which is occupied

Facilities that do not meet the requirements for a 15 minute patrol frequency should have a fire watch patrol every 30 minutes.

**Record Keeping**

A fire watch log shall be maintained at the facility. The log must be available to the Kirkland Fire Department at all times during the fire watch. The log will show the following;

- The address of the facility
- Times the patrol completed each tour of the facility
- Name of the person(s) conducting the fire watch
- Record of any communication(s) to the Fire Department and/or monitoring company
- Record of other information as required by the Fire Department

**Cancellation of Fire Watch**

It is the owners' responsibility to cancel the fire watch once the fire protection system has been fully restored. Once the fire watch has been cancelled, the owner or representative must notify the monitoring company and the Kirkland Fire Marshal's office. The Fire Marshal's office can be reached during normal business hours at (425) 587-3650. If repairs are completed after normal business hours, or on the weekend or a holiday, you may notify the Fire Marshal's office the next business day. If requested, the fire watch log shall be forwarded to the Kirkland Fire Department and will be maintained in the Fire Prevention Division file for the building.

For additional information about fire alarms and fire suppression systems or confidence testing of the systems, contact the Kirkland Fire Department at (425) 587-3650.

**Sample Fire Log**

<b>ADDRESS</b>		123 5 <sup>th</sup> Avenue
<b>Time</b>	<b>Designated Fire Watch</b>	<b>Notes</b>
0130	John Doe	Started watch, notified FD & monitoring Co., First Tour
0200	John Doe	Second tour
0230	John Doe	Maintenance arrived & Third Tour
0300	John Doe	Alarm back on line. FD & monitoring co. notified

*Policy Approved 5/24/2011 by  
Grace A. Steuart, Fire Marshal  
Kirkland Fire Department*

Attachments:  
Fire Log – Attachment #1

