



TACOMA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Information Bulletin

FIRE WATCH

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, or there are an excessive number of accidental 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. Personnel to conduct the fire watch are determined by the building owner.

Note: A professional security company is not required. A fire watch is also required whenever fire protection systems are in a trouble or a supervisory mode for more than eight hours. A nuisance alarm is defined as "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)

Owner Responsibilities

- a) Establish, instruct and maintain fire watch personnel.
- b) Notify the monitoring company.
- c) Notify the Tacoma Fire Department Communications Center (FCC) that the system is not working and again when the system has been repaired. Call FCC at 253.591.5733.
- d) Contact the repair company to fix the fire protection system(s).
- e) If a Notice of Violation has been written, contact the Tacoma Fire Department Confidence Test Officer at 253.591.5740 or e-mail to tfdcto@cityoftacoma.org when the system has been repaired.

For More Information:
Fire Prevention Bureau

253.591.5740

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 the Tacoma Fire Department by calling 9-1-1 with the exact address and type of emergency if a fire is discovered.
- 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 evacuation of the building.
- e) Determine at least one means of direct communication with the Fire Department. A telephone is acceptable.
- f) Maintain a log of fire watch activities.
- g) Have knowledge of the location and use of fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers.

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

Frequency of Inspections

Fire watch personnel should 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 or educational occupancy.

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

(over)

Record Keeping

A fire watch log should be maintained at the facility. The log must be available to the Tacoma Fire Department at all times during the fire watch. The log should show the following:

- 1) Address of the facility.
- 2) Times that the patrol has completed each tour of the facility.
- 3) Name of the person conducting the fire watch.
- 4) Record of communication(s) to the Fire Department and monitoring company.
- 5) Record of other information as directed by Fire Department personnel.

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, the FCC and the Confidence Test Officer. The Fire Prevention Bureau is reached during normal business hours at 253.591.5740.

For additional information about fire protection systems or confidence testing of systems, contact the Tacoma Fire Department at 591.5740.

Tacoma Fire Department required Fire Watch

The Tacoma Fire Department official initiating the fire watch shall promptly notify FCC of the system condition and the Confidence Test Officer by e-mail, tfdcto@cityoftacoma.org.

References

- The International Fire Code 1404.5—Fire Safety During Construction and Demolition
- The International Fire Code 901.7—Systems Out of Service
- NFPA 72

This and other Tacoma Fire Department Information Bulletins can be downloaded from the Department's Web site at <http://www.tacomafiredepartment.org>

Use the Attached Fire Watch Form if/when necessary.

TACOMA FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIRE WATCH FORM



Per City Ordinance, a fire watch is required at:

BUSINESS NAME:						PHONE NUMBER:					
BUILDING ADDRESS:											
SYSTEM TYPE:			SPRINKLER <input type="checkbox"/>			FIRE ALARM <input type="checkbox"/>			OTHER:		
Fire Watch Required By:						Starting Time:			Date:		
Person Responsible for Fire Watch:				Name (Print):				Signature:			
Time	Initials	Time	Initials	Time	Initials	Time	Initials	Time	Initials	Time	Initials
Name of the Fire Alarm Company:				Time fire alarm placed in service:				Phone Number:			
Name (Print)						Signature					
Upon Completion of Fire Watch: 1. Notify Tacoma Fire Department Communications @ 253.591.5733 2. Return this form to the Fire Prevention Bureau @ 3471 S. 35 th St. Tacoma WA 98409 or Fax 253.594.7943 - Attention Confidence Testing Officer.											