



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

LIFE SAFETY SERVICES

GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

GUIDELINE A.05 – Establishment of a Fire Watch

A.05.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this guideline is to assist business owners, building managers and others with the proper establishment of a fire watch when required by Life Safety Services.

A.05.2 SCOPE

This guideline shall be followed anytime a required fire alarm system, required fire sprinkler system, or any other required fire protection system is out of service. This guideline shall also be followed if a fire watch is required by the Fire Department for any other reason.

A FIRE WATCH is defined in the California Fire Code as: A temporary measure 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.

A.05.3 AUTHORITY

California Fire Code, Fire Protection Systems; Systems out of Service: “In the event of a failure of a fire protection system or an excessive number of accidental activations, the chief is authorized to require the building owner or occupant to provide fire watch personnel until the system is repaired. Such individuals shall be provided with at least one approved means for notification of the fire department and their only duty shall be to perform constant patrols of the protected premises and keep watch for fires.”

National Fire Protection Association – NFPA 101, Fire Watch states: “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 from fire or life safety dangers.”

California Fire Code, Hot Work, Fire Watch: “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. A fire watch is not required when the hot work area has no fire hazards or combustible exposures.” Fire watch personnel 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.

California Fire Code, Fire safety During Construction, Alteration or Demolition of a Building; Alterations of Buildings: When alterations require modification of a portion of a fire protection system, the remainder of the system shall be kept in service and a fire watch shall be established at the deficient areas. When it is necessary to shut down the entire system, a fire watch shall be kept on site until the system is returned to service. *Exception: A single device such as a pull station or detector, or a single sprinkler head, may not necessitate a fire watch, inquire with Life Safety Services for approval.* Where a building is being demolished and a standpipe is existing within such a building, such standpipe shall be maintained in an operable condition so as to be available for use by the fire department. Such standpipe shall be demolished with the building but shall not be demolished more than one floor below the floor being demolished.

NFPA 241 Safeguarding Construction, Alteration, and Demolition Operations, Chapter 9 Safeguarding Roofing Operations, Fire Watch: “A fire watch shall be conducted for at least one hour after torches have been extinguished.”

NFPA 303 Marinas and Boatyards, Chapter 7 Berthing and Storage, Wet Storage and Berthing: “Each berth shall be arranged such that a boat occupying the berth can be removed in an emergency without the necessity of moving other boats.” A fire watch shall be implemented if multiple berthing is permitted as a result of an approved Action Plan or an approved Special Event permit.

A.05.4 PROCEDURE

- Assigned personnel shall not be assigned to duties other than fire watch.
- Assigned personnel shall patrol the area every 30 minutes where a required fire protection system is out of service or where a hazardous process is being conducted. If a facility can not be completely patrolled with this frequency, extra personnel shall be assigned to fire watch duties.
- Assigned personnel shall maintain a log documenting fire watch activities. A sample “Fire Watch Log” provided at end of guideline.

- Shall be trained to notify occupants of the facility if the need to evacuate arises.
- Shall be provided with communication equipment to notify 9-1-1 of a fire or emergency.
- Shall have knowledge of the location and use of fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers.

