



Farmers Branch Fire Department

Fire Watch

Policy Statement



Farmers Branch Fire Department • 13333 Hutton Drive, Farmers Branch, TX 75234 • (972) 919-2640

Reference: 2018 International Fire Code and City Ordinance 3607

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 901.7)
- Construction/demolition sites (IFC 3304.5)
- Hot Work (IFC 3504.2)
- Pyrotechnics, special effects, or fireworks (IFC Chapter 56)

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. (IFC 202)
- Nuisance Alarm:** Any alarm caused by mechanical failure, malfunction, improper installation, or lack of proper maintenance, or an alarm activated by a cause that cannot be determined. (IFC 202)
- Hot Work:** Operations including cutting, welding, Thermite welding, brazing, soldering, grinding, thermal Spraying, thawing pipe, installation of torch-applied roof systems or any similar activity. (IFC 202)

General Requirements

Personnel used to conduct the fire watch are subject to the approval of the Farmers Branch 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.

1. Fire protection impairments

Where 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 the occupants of the building
- Contact the repair company to fix the alarm or suppression system(s)
- Notify the Farmers Branch Fire Department that the system is not working and again when the system has been repaired. Call the Fire Prevention Division at 972-919-2640

Personnel, serving as fire watch, have the following responsibilities:

- Conduct periodic patrols of the entire facility as specified
- Identify any fire, life or property hazards
- Maintain a log of fire watch activities (See sample on page 3)
- Have knowledge of the location and use of portable 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 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 the hot work permit, is authorized to extend the fire watch based on the hazards or work performed.

Exception: Where the hot work area has no 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 the 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 Farmers Branch 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 system notification devices or public address function of the fire alarm system is still functioning, use them to assist in 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 fire fighting and/or fire extinguisher use

Frequency of Inspection

Fire watch personnel should patrol the entire facility every fifteen 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 Farmers Branch Fire Department at all times during the fire watch. The log shall show the following:

- The address of the facility
- Times the patrols are completed for each tour of the facility
- Name(s) 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 owner's responsibility to cancel the fire watch when the fire protection system has been fully restored. Once the fire watch has been cancelled, the owner or representative shall notify the monitoring company and the Farmers Branch Fire Department. If requested, the fire watch log shall be forwarded to the Farmers Branch Fire Department and will be maintained in the Fire Prevention Division records.

Sample Log

Address 123 5th Ave

Time	Designated Fire Watch	Notes
0130	John Doe	Started watch, notified FD & Monitoring company
0200	John Doe	Completed first floor
0230	John Doe	Completed 2 nd floor
0300	John Doe	Alarm company arrived, completed 3 rd floor
0330	John Doe	Alarm repaired, completed 4 th floor
0400	John Doe	Fire watch cancelled