

## **FIR-1.04 - Fire Watch - [Printable Version](#)**

### **FIRE WATCH**

*Administrative Rule Adopted by Bureau of Fire & Rescue Pursuant to Rule-Making Authority*  
ARB-FIR-1.04

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#### **PURPOSE:**

To provide guidance in identifying circumstances where a fire watch should be provided and the process to establish one.

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#### **SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all structures where Portland Fire & Rescue (PF&R) has authority.

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#### **REFERENCES:**

Title 31.20.070 provides authority to require and, when necessary, provide fire watch patrols in situations that are deemed to be imminently dangerous.

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#### **RESPONSIBILITY:**

It is the responsibility of the Fire Bureau, when inspecting or responding to an alarm and finding an imminently dangerous condition such as a required fire protection system that is inoperative or indicating a "trouble" condition, to require the owner to restore the system or eliminate other dangerous conditions. If the system cannot be restored or other conditions abated before the Bureau representative is ready to leave the premises, the Officer/Deputy Fire Marshal should require an equal degree of safety be provided for the occupancy, or require and approve a fire watch plan and provider, or determine if a fire watch is necessary.

This policy is to be viewed as a guideline and in no way restricts the latitude of an Officer/Inspector/Investigator who may discover other imminently dangerous conditions requiring a fire watch.

Examples deemed to be imminently dangerous:

1. A Fire Alarm system in an alarm or trouble condition, or not functional in residential, institutional, or assembly occupancies;
2. Hazardous material spills or other situations presenting a hazard to life or property;
3. Sprinkler systems that are out of order.

**NOTE:** In warehouses where sprinkler systems are inoperative, it generally would not be appropriate to require a fire watch.

## **PROCEDURES:**

1.  
Where fire protection systems have been compromised, have the owner attempt to reset any alarm system or determine the reason for the sprinkler system being inoperable.
  2.  
When systems can not be reset or imminently dangerous conditions are not fully abated and the building is occupied by people who may not be awake, alert or able to evacuate quickly, a fire watch should be required (typical examples are residential, institutional and assembly occupancies).
  3.  
Obtain approval prior to requiring a fire watch:
    - A. During FMO office hours, the Officer/ Inspector/ Investigator should notify a Senior Inspector of their intended action.
    - B. When the FMO office is closed, the Company Officer should notify their supervisor.
  4.  
Issue Notice of Violation:
    - A. After approval is obtained, issue a 'Notice of Violation-Fire Watch Agreement' and note how often patrols shall be provided. Generally, 30 minute patrols will be adequate; more frequent if there is a high-life hazard such as a nursing home.
    - B. A record of these patrols shall be kept by the patrolling parties.
    - C. An FMO Company Referral (PF&R Form 300.07) shall be forwarded to the FMO for follow-up inspections.
  5.  
The Officer/Inspector/Investigator may allow the owner to provide the fire watch with their own staff, an agent, or by a Licensed Bonded Security Guard (see attached list). In the event that a security guard is required but not available to perform the task, an Off-Duty Inspector will be called back to perform the required fire watch.
  6.  
An Officer/Inspector/Investigator may request to see the log during any visit to the site.
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## ***ADDENDUM***

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## ***HISTORY***

Filed for inclusion in PPD June 13, 2003.

Revision filed in PPD September 27, 2004.

Originally adopted by Fire Marshal as Fire Prevention Division Policy Manual Document A-4, effective July 20, 1994. Revised March 20, 2001 and September 8, 2004.