**UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE**

**Office of the Fire Marshal**

**FIRE WATCH GUIDELINES**

1. **PURPOSE**

This guideline is to be utilized when a Fire Detection system or Fire Suppression system becomes impaired for a specified amount of time, when “hot work” is being performed within the facility, blocked and/or locked means of egress corridors and/or exit doors, during construction, alteration, renovation or demolition work within a structure/building, or at assemblies where the number of personnel, location and the nature of the event may warrant the implementation of enhanced public safety. These guidelines are to be utilized for all University of Louisville and University of Louisville Foundation properties, whether owned or leased, including partially leased spaces.

1. **DEFINITIONS**

**Fire Protection System:** Any system used to detect a fire, extinguish or control a fire, activate an alarm, control or manage smoke, or any combination of these items. Examples of these include fire alarms, smoke detectors, heat detectors, sprinkler systems, fire pumps and fire extinguishers.

**Hot Work:** Any work conducted within, on or near a facility that involves cutting of metals where sparks may be produced, welding, brazing, soldering, grinding, heat treating and any other similar type of work that has the ability to produce a spark, flame or heat which may result in a fire or explosion. A Fire Watch must be maintained at least **30 minutes** after the completion of any hot work performed.

**Fire Watch:** This is a short-term emergency measure intended to provide an acceptable level of life safety when an unsafe or hazardous condition exists within a structure or building. This is a temporary measure designed to ensure continuous and systematic monitoring of a structure or building, or any portion thereof, by a qualified person or persons, for the purpose of detecting early signs of fire, alerting occupants and initiating evacuation and notifying 911 and DPS Communications Center (502.852.6111). Fire Watch personnel shall check all areas of the structure or building on a regular basis as defined in the procedures section of this guideline.

**Fire Watch Log:** This document shall be completed at each Fire Watch and shall include facility name, address, date, time initiated, time of each patrol, name of person(s) on fire watch and the time of cancellation. Any specific hazards noticed shall also be documented. (Refer to the end of this guideline for a Fire Watch Log form)

1. **REFERENCES**

National Fire Protection Association:

NFPA 1 – Fire Code

NFPA 25 – Standard for Inspection, Testing and Maintenance of Water-based Fire Protection Systems

NFPA 51B – Standard for Fire Protection During Welding, Cutting and Other Hot Work

NFPA 72 – National Fire Alarm Code

NFPA 101 – Life Safety Code

NFPA 241 – Standard for Safeguarding Construction, Alteration and Demolition Operations

1. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Individuals who are assigned to Fire Watch shall:

* Be familiar with the structure/building at which the watch is being conducted.
* Be trained to identify fire hazards and recognize smoke conditions.
* Know the impairment to the Fire Protection System(s) that created the need for the Fire Watch to ensure proper actions are taken to notify occupants if an emergency situation arises.
* Ensure occupant notification equipment is on site and in working order. Ensure there is enough equipment that all persons assigned to Fire Watch will have adequate materials needed for the job. Examples of these items include:
  + Hand-held air horn
  + Bull horn
  + Whistle
  + Portable radio
  + Cell phone
* Be knowledgeable in the use of portable fire extinguishers.
* Be knowledgeable in how to initiate notification to structure or building occupants that an evacuation is necessary.
* Maintain a “Fire Watch Log”.
* Conduct thorough inspections of all structure or building spaces at the designated frequency intervals.
* In the event smoke and/or fire are discovered, immediately notify occupants to evacuate via the pre-determined means. Notify the DPS Communications Center (502.852.6111) and 911 of the type and location of the incident.
* If you are performing “Hot Work” and a fire is detected, evacuation of the building by the pre-determined means shall be initiated and notification made to 911 and the DPS Communications Center (502.852.6111).
* Any fire, regardless of size or severity, must have a report completed by the Department of Public Safety. This includes smoldering materials.
* Assist in the safe evacuation of occupants.
* Upon termination of the Fire Watch, return the log to the University Fire Marshal.

1. **REQUIREMENTS**

Due to the complexity of our campus and facilities, occupancies will have varying levels of risk associated with them. To treat all structures or buildings the same would not be appropriate, thus each situation shall be evaluated individually.

Fire Protection System outages, partial or complete, for maintenance purposes shall be evaluated based on the time necessary to perform the work and the type of work being performed. Notification shall be made to the Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC) or their alternate prior to any work being performed, location of work, what Fire Protection Systems are affected and again when the system is restored to full operation.

When **“Hot Work”** (see definition) is being performed, the contractor shall take all necessary precautions to prevent unwanted ignition of materials. This may include utilization of fire blankets, removal of insulation material or any other combustible material within a reasonable surrounding area. Contractors shall provide at least one (1) portable fire extinguisher rated for the type of environment where the work is being performed. If work is being performed in multiple locations, not within a close proximity to each other, a portable fire extinguisher rated for the type of environment where the work is being performed shall be maintained at each location, along with one person at each location on dedicated fire watch.

An unoccupied or vacant structure or building may be placed on a “Modified Fire Watch” meaning the facility may not have to have someone assigned specifically to that location, as long as periodic checks of the property are conducted at a minimum of once each hour. This check shall be a thorough walkthrough of the property, ensuring no occupants have entered or are currently inside and ensuring the facility is secured to prevent unwanted entry. A Fire Watch log shall be completed with this also.

Assemblies, structures or buildings meeting the above listed criteria for a Fire Watch should follow the below listed time frame for implementation (unless otherwise approved). Keep in mind, these may be modified and/or altered at any time depending on time of day, hazard, occupancy, etc.

* All Residential facilities – In excess of 1 hour
* High-hazard facilities such as those with labs, processing areas that utilize flammable or combustible liquids and/or gases in their processes, etc. – In excess of 1 hour
* General classroom and office facilities – In excess of 2 hours
* Large assemblies – Evaluated individually, but may be initiated prior to the start of the event

In the event of a known or suspected power outage to any University facility, the University Fire Marshal shall be immediately notified. A Fire Watch may need to be implemented due to possible impairment of the alarm and communication systems, however this will be determined on a case by case basis.

In the event the DPS Communications Center loses communication through the Continuum System which affects notification of Fire Alarms and/or Sprinkler Alarms at any University facility, the University Fire Marshal shall be immediately notified and a Fire Watch shall be implemented as soon as possible as outside notification of an emergency situation will not occur.

Personnel assigned to a Fire Watch shall have no other duties or responsibilities during their designated watch.

When structures or buildings are to have periodic walkthroughs performed due to the impairment, these shall be conducted as follows:

* Any residential/sleeping facility, high-hazard facility or large assembly – **every 30 minutes**.
* General classroom facilities, office facilities or other structures or buildings – **every hour**.

1. **TERMINATION OF FIRE WATCH**

The Fire Watch, once designated, shall remain in place without interruption until such time as the impairment that warranted the watch is repaired and the Fire Protection system is back in service. This shall be determined by the University Fire Marshal.

Upon termination of the Fire Watch, return the Fire Watch Log sheet(s) to the University Fire Marshal.

 

**#SAFETY IS OUR CARDINAL RULE!**

If you have any questions regarding Fire Watch procedures and/or requirements, please contact the University of Louisville Fire Marshal at 502-852-3473 or 502-643-3473. You may also email at: [Michael.long.1@louisville.edu](mailto:Michael.long.1@louisville.edu). Adopted 12/1/2019

**UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE**

**Office of the Fire Marshal**

**FIRE WATCH LOG**

**Facility Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time Watch Began: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time Watch Ended: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Location (floor or specific area if designated) Time Initials**

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**Specific Hazards or issues: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Printed Name of Person Performing Fire Watch: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signature of Person Performing Fire Watch: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Return this document to the University of Louisville Fire Marshal upon completion of the Fire Watch. Adopted 12/1/2019