



CODE INFORMATION SHEET

Based on the 2018 edition of the Vermont Fire and Building Safety Code, NFPA 101 and NFPA 1

FIRE WATCH REQUIREMENTS and EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

A building owner may require a fire watch if a fire protection system falls, if there are an excessive number of accidental activations or nuisance alarms, or a special circumstance or event. Personnel to conduct the fire watch are determined by the building owner. A professional security company is not required. Emergency action plans are required in many locations

Definition of a Fire Watch

NFPA 1- 3.3.125 Fire Watch.

The assignment of a person or persons to an area for the express purpose of notifying the fire department and/or building occupants of an emergency, preventing a fire from occurring, extinguishing small fires, or protecting the public from fire or life safety dangers.

Owner Responsibilities

- a) Establish, instruct and maintain fire watch personnel.
- b) Notify the fire alarm monitoring company.
- c) Notify the local Fire Department and the Division of Fire Safety Regional Office that the system is not working and again when the system has been repaired.
- d) Contact the repair company to fix the fire protection system(s).
- e) If a Notice of Violation has been written, contact the Asst. Fire Marshal when the system has been repaired.

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 Fire Department if a fire is discovered by calling 9-1-1 with the exact address and type of emergency.
- 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 or radio 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.
- h) Fire watch personnel cannot have other duties besides their assigned fire watch. However, the Fire Department may designate other duties.

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 a occupied assembly occupancy.

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 should be maintained at the facility. The log must be available 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 or after the end of the special circumstance or event.

Once the fire watch has been cancelled, the owner or representative must notify the monitoring company, and the local Fire Company.

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Highlighted Requirements of the Vermont Fire and Building Safety Code

NFPA 1- 1.7.17 Standby and Fire Watch Personnel.

1.7.17.1 The AHJ shall have the authority to require standby fire personnel or an approved fire watch when potentially hazardous conditions or a reduction in a life safety feature exist due to the type of performance, display, exhibit, occupancy, contest, or activity; an impairment to a fire protection feature; or the number of persons present.

1.7.17.2 The owner, agent, or lessee shall employ one or more qualified persons as required and approved, to be on duty

1.7.17.3 Such standby fire personnel or fire watch personnel shall be subject to the AHJ's orders at all times and shall be identifiable and remain on duty during the times such places are open to the public, when such activity is being conducted, or as required by the AHJ.



A fire watch should consist of trained personnel who continuously patrol the affected area. Ready access to fire extinguishers and the ability to promptly notify the fire department are important items to consider. During the patrol of the area, the person should not only be looking for fire, but making sure that the other fire protection features of the building such as egress routes and alarm systems are available and functioning properly.

NFPA 1 - Chapter 10 General Safety Requirements

10.8 Emergency Action Plans.

10.8.1 Where Required. Emergency action plans shall be provided for high-rise, health care, ambulatory health care, residential board and care, assembly, day-care centers, special amusement buildings, hotels and dormitories, detention and correctional occupancies, educational, underground and windowless structures, facilities storing or handling materials covered by Chapter 60, or where required by the AHJ.

10.8.2 Plan Requirements.

10.8.2.1* Emergency action plans shall include the following:

- (1) Procedures for reporting of emergencies
(2) Occupant and staff response to emergencies
(3)* Evacuation, relocation and shelter-in-place procedures appropriate to the building, its occupancy, emergencies, and hazards
(4) Appropriateness of the use of elevators
(5) Design and conduct of fire drills
(6) Type and coverage of building fire protection systems
(7) Other items required by the AHJ

10.8.2.2 Emergency action plans shall be submitted to the AHJ for review when required by the AHJ.

10.8.2.3 Emergency action plans shall be reviewed and updated as required by the AHJ. [101: 4.8.2.3]

NFPA 101 - 13.7.7 Drills.

13.7.7.1 The employees or attendants of assembly occupancies shall be trained and drilled in the duties they are to perform in case of fire, panic, or other emergency to effect orderly exiting.

13.7.7.2 Employees or attendants of assembly occupancies shall be instructed in the proper use of portable fire extinguishers and other manual fire suppression equipment where provided.