

Fire Watch Packet Contents

- 1 – Fire Watch Requirements
- 2 – Fire Watch Log sheets
- 1 – Fire Watch Check List
- 1 – Fire Watch Tracking sheet
- 2 – Tenant Notification
- 2 – Fire Watch Signs
- 1 – FDC Sign (in plastic ziplock with one wire tie)



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

2201 Warwick Way, Marriottsville, MD 21104
410-313-6000

Fire Watch Requirements

A fire watch is a short term, emergency measure to provide an acceptable level of life safety in a building that has an impaired fire safety system. It is intended to allow continued occupancy of a building or a facility that may not be safe to be occupied during the time period required for implementing appropriate changes or repairs. The purpose of the fire watch is to check all areas of the building on a regular basis to detect fire/life safety emergencies and then alert the occupants to take appropriate action as early as possible.

The Office of the Fire Marshal, in accordance with Howard County Fire Code Title 17.104 Subsection 1.7.13, shall have the authority to require standby fire personnel (fire watch). A person failing to provide a fire watch or carry out the duties of a fire watch is subject to both civil and criminal penalties with fines up to \$1,000.

Owner/occupant Responsibilities

- The owner, agent or lessee shall employ one or more qualified persons, as required.
- A fire watch must be provided for the entire time that a system is out of service.
- Employees with a functional knowledge of the building layout and its systems are preferred. However, participating in the fire watch is not an assignment for every employee. Employees must be able to operate valves, climb stairs, dial phones and speak calmly and clearly in stressful situation and manage people in an emergency.
- Employees may also be required to operate a fire extinguisher. However, the evacuation and occupant's safety are their primary responsibility.
- A minimum of one person per 100,000 sq. ft of building space, or one person for every five (5) floors are required. Additional persons may be required by the Office of the Fire Marshal.
- The fire watch shall have the ability of communicating with the Howard County Police Department, Division of Communications (911 Center).
- When multiple personnel are required, they shall have the ability to communicate with each other.
- Personnel used for the fire watch are to be used exclusively for this purpose.

Procedure

1. When the HCPD Division of Communications is notified that an alarm and/or sprinkler system is to be out of service for more than four (4) hours they will notify the On Call Fire Investigator.
2. The On Call Fire Investigator will respond and evaluate the need and requirements for a fire watch.
3. The building will be posted by the investigator with the following sign: "**A FIRE PROTECTION FEATURE IS OUT OF SERVICE. IN CASE OF A FIRE EMERGENCY, DIAL 911**". This shall be posted at all entrances, on all floors and all areas. If the fire alarm is out of service, the sign shall also be posted at each manual pull stations.



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Standby Fire Personnel (Fire Watch) Responsibilities

1. Personnel shall be identified and remain on duty and remain inside the building their entire shift unless an emergency evacuation is required.
2. A fire watch shall walk the entire building a minimum of each hour checking for smoke and/or fire and ensuring that all means of egress are accessible and unobstructed.
3. A log must be maintained on the premises with entries every hour. Entries should note the area checked, the time it was checked, and by whom.
4. Carry out any other duties assigned by the Fire Marshal's Office personnel.
5. **In the event of an emergency**
 - a. Call 911 and report emergency giving exact building address and location of smoke or fire.
 - b. Notify other fire watch personnel and activate the impaired fire alarm and/or sprinkler system if possible.
 - c. Evacuate the occupants.
 - d. Direct responding fire personnel to the smoke/fire area.

Fire Protection System Restored

1. A responsible person shall contact Division of Communications at 410-313-2929. Notify them that the building has been on a fire watch and the system has been repaired and is back in service.
2. Communications will then contact the On Call Fire Investigator.
3. The On Call Fire Investigator will respond and ensure that the system(s) is back in-service, remove the building from Fire Watch and retrieve the logs for review and filing.

For questions or additional information, contact the Fire Marshal's Office 410-313-6040.



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FIRE WATCH CHECK LIST

Building Address _____

TASK	Date/Time	Yes/No/NA	COMMENTS	INFORMATION
Contacted for Fire watch				Note date, time, and who was contacted.
Fire Watch Established				Add in comments the reason not required or requirements. You can establish the level of Fire Watch. See (1)
Manager/ Contact name				Add contact name and phone number in comments.
Handout packet/forms and explain the Fire Watch procedure				Give contact handouts/packet, forms, etc. and review with contact.
Signs completed and installed				Fill out resident's notification signs and have contact install. Install FDC sign if applicable.
Inspection				Spot check; see if the building is on a fire watch. See (2)
Building removed from Fire Watch				Verify corrective action has been completed. This may be done over the phone initially, but a site verification is needed, when possible.
All Logs removed from building				Pick up all logs from the property, review and file in street address file.

Fire Official _____ ID # _____ DATE _____

(1) Fire Watch established due to Fire Protection feature out of service. You may require a fire watch for just a floor or section of the building. Fire Watch established because of a type of program, capacity or materials being used in a performance.

(2) Fire Watch not being done or done incorrectly owner/manager subject to a Class A citation.



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Office of the Fire Marshal Fire Watch Log

Building Name _____ Telephone Number _____

Address _____

Watch Instituted By: _____ Date _____

Time	Conducted By (Print Name)	Smoke or Fire Evident	Area (s) of Building Checked	Time of Next Check	Initial

Department of Fire & Rescue Services, Office of the Fire Marshal: **410-313-6040**

Howard County Communications (911 center): **410-313-2929** (*call when system is back in service*)

Fax completed logs to: **410-313-6066**



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Fire Watch Tracking

Building Name/Address	
Fire Watch Initiated By: Date/Time	
Contact Name/Phone Number	

Fire Official	Date	Comments

This is a tracking/chain of custody form. Any fire official who has an association with the fire watch, indicate in the comments section the involvement, sign and date.

The fire official who set up the fire watch complete the heading and sign on the first line.



HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

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410-313-6000

To: Tenants of _____
Building Name

Address: _____

From: _____, Management Company

Date _____

This building is on a Fire Watch due to the building's (alarm, detection, sprinkler, standpipe or other) _____ fire protection system(s) being out of service.

There may not be an automatic notification of an incident to summon assistance. Call 911 immediately if there is an emergency and then assist in the evacuation of the building. If you have any questions contact:

_____ at _____.

Thank You



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Building Name

Address: _____

From: _____, Management Company

Date _____

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There may not be an automatic notification of an incident to summon assistance. Call 911 immediately if there is an emergency and then assist in the evacuation of the building. If you have any questions contact:

_____ at _____.

Thank You



A Fire Protection Feature is Out of Service

Type of System Out Of Service

In Case of a Fire Emergency, Dial 911

Your location is _____
Building Address

Building Manager/Contact Name and Phone Number

Fire Official

Date



A Fire Protection Feature is Out of Service

Type of System Out Of Service

In Case of a Fire Emergency, Dial 911

Your location is _____
Building Address

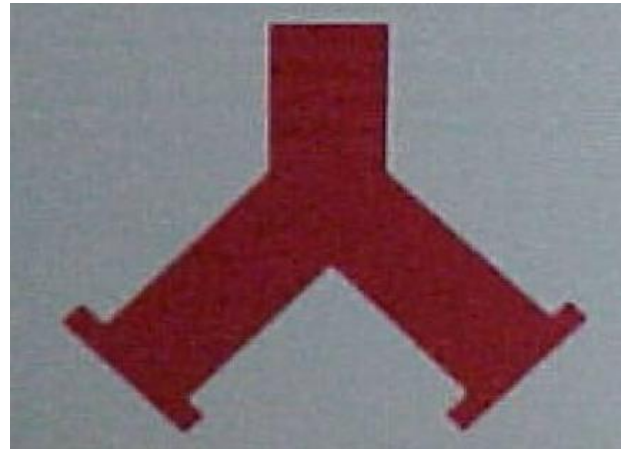
Building Manager/Contact Name and Phone Number

Fire Official

Date



WARNING



SPRINKLER / STANDPIPE SYSTEM IS NOT IN SERVICE

Before using FDC verify if functional

PROPERTY of HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT of FIRE & RESCUE