

Fire Watch Policy

1.10.4.0 Fire Watch Policy

1.10.4.1 Purpose

To assist members of the Long Beach Fire Department when assessing the need to post a fire watch in occupancies that present a high safety hazard to life and/or property. The Fire Watch Policy and Procedures apply when all or part of the required fire protection systems are interrupted for repairs and/or maintenance that may extend past normal business hours, not functioning properly, not functioning at all, or when they are damaged or destroyed by fire or other disasters. When the required fire protection systems are determined not to be functioning properly and repairs require the intentional shut down of all or a portion of the systems, the risks to life safety and property are increased substantially.

In the event of a failure of a fire protection system or an excessive number of accidental activations, the Fire Chief or his designee is authorized to require the building owner or occupant to provide fire watch personnel until the system is repaired and returned to normal function.

A Fire Watch Order is defined as: The assignment of a responsible person or persons to provide continuous patrol of a building, area or premises for the purpose of detecting fires and transmitting an immediate alarm to the building occupants and Fire Department. The Fire Chief or his designee shall specify the number of fire watch personnel and duties to be performed. A Fire Watch Order will:

1. Provide a temporary alternate fire safety protection plan to buildings, other structures and premises within the City of Long Beach.
2. Facilitate communication among the stakeholders involved in the Fire Watch Order Policy and Procedures.
3. Initiate the use of the Fire Watch Order Form as the exclusive document used to communicate and document Fire Watch Orders in the City of Long Beach.

1.10.4.2 Scope

This Policy is intended to be used by members of the Long Beach Fire Department at the scene of an emergency or other incidents involving damaged or an inoperative Fire Alarm or Fire Protection systems due to an emergency or other factors.

There are at least two general types of Fire Watch Orders in connection with Emergency Repairs and Scheduled Repairs.

1. Building Wide - may include all interior and exterior areas of a building.
2. Partial Building - may involve a significant area, floor, wing, atrium, theater, lobby, cafeteria or some other significant portion of a building.

1.10.4.3 Fire Watch Duration

Once established, a fire watch shall be maintained until such time that the Fire Chief or his designee determines that the building or premises is safe from hazard to life or property, or when the fire protection equipment or systems are restored to reliable service.

A Fire Watch Order should not exceed 24 continuous hours; unless the Fire Chief or his designee grants an extension of time.

1.10.4.4 When to Post a Fire Watch

1.10.4.4.1 Scheduled Repairs

Maintenance or testing procedures should allow the repair person to return the required fire systems to normal operating condition by no later than 5 p.m. each day unless an extension of time is granted by the Fire Chief or his designee.

Scheduled Repairs may include but not be limited to the following:

1. Preventative maintenance, alterations or renovations.
2. Testing and maintenance of fire protection systems.
3. Other renovations or repairs to the building.

1.10.4.4.2 Emergency Repairs

Emergency Repairs may involve situations that endanger life and create substantial increased risk of a fire going undetected in its early stages. To ensure the life safety of the occupants and the building's protection; as well as to ensure that a fire does not go undetected and possibly get out of control, these situations shall warrant a Fire Watch Order as an alternative to closing a building or a significant portion thereof.

Emergency Repairs require immediate attention and necessitate the intentional shut down of the entire or a significant portion of the fire protection systems. An Emergency Repair may include but not be limited to:

1. A broken water line that supplies the fire suppression systems.
2. A prolonged power outage.
3. Vandalism or malicious mischief.