

# Fire Watch Procedure Template

## Life Safety Code - Health Care Facilities

Division of Quality Assurance – Bureau of Regulatory Compliance  
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**PURPOSE:** To establish a plan of action should the fire alarm system **or** sprinkler system be out of service for more than 4 hours in a 24-hour period. (Procedures must address both the fire alarm and sprinkler systems.)

**ACCESS:** Available in writing at staff stations and comprehended by training of all facility staff.

**STAFF:** Facility staff trained in Rescue, Alarm, Contain, and Extinguish/ Evacuate (RACE) and the implementation of a facility-wide fire watch.

**DOCUMENTATION:** Each tour is recorded with findings noting date time, and staff initials. A fire watch tour is a periodic walking tour of the entire facility by one or more assigned and trained staff. The tour monitors the facility through direct observation of all rooms for possible signs of fire.

**OCCURANCES:** Fire alarm system outages or sprinkler system outages can occur during construction, maintenance, renovation, electrical storms or other unplanned events which eliminate part or all of the fire alarm system. Sprinkler systems may also be made inoperable by a variety of planned and unplanned events.

1. Contact the facility administrator, nurse director and maintenance manager when any problems are encountered with the fire alarm system or sprinkler system. (Action: staff)
2. Contact the fire alarm or sprinkler contractor should the maintenance manager be unable to correct the problem. (Action: administrator/nurse director/maintenance manager). Fire alarm or sprinkler contractor shall be on site or on contract until system is repaired, replaced or reinitialized and working.
3. Notify the fire department at (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ that the sprinkler system or fire alarm system is not working correctly. (Action: administrator/nurse director/maintenance manager).
4. If the sprinkler or fire alarm system is inoperable for a time period of more than 4 hours in a 24 hour period, notify the Ohio Department of Health District Office. They can be contacted at (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ . (Action: administrator/ nurse director/maintenance manager).
5. Fire watch procedure shall designate facility tours designating wing, floor, or building identifier. (Action: Facility Administrator)
6. Fire watch tours shall occur at ¼ hour intervals, 24 hours a day. (Action: Administration)



**Note: This template is provided to assist facilities in developing a fire watch protocol. Use of this template is not a regulatory requirement.**

7. Fire watch shall be performed by personnel solely dedicated to the fire watch and no other facility-related activities or events. (Action: Administration)
8. A fire watch should check and document the following in all rooms including:
  - Resident rooms (remove smoking materials and extension cords);
  - Dietary and Laundry rooms (remove lint from dryers and soiled linen);
  - Mechanical and Electrical rooms (remove combustible/flammable materials);
  - Fire department access to the facility (remove snow and ice from exits);
  - Fire department access to hydrants, sprinkler connections, standpipes, and fire extinguishers;
  - Exit access, exits and exit discharge are unobstructed;
  - Storage of combustible or flammable materials shall be in approved containers or designated storage areas;
  - Identify temporary heating devices and have them removed,
  - Fire and Smoke doors closed properly;
  - Machinery unnecessary to be running continuously is turned off;
  - Sprinkler valves shall be open and sealed, gauges indicate normal pressures, and sprinkler heads shall be unobstructed;
  - Construction or renovation work areas shall be monitored continuously.
9. Maintenance staff shall be available on site or on call for equipment emergency shutdown situations.
10. Additional fire extinguishers shall be distributed facility-wide and staff shall be informed of locations.

## **FIRE**

In the event a potential fire situation is identified behind a door:

1. **Do Not Open Door.**
2. Touch door handle and door leaf and verify raised temperature.
3. Smell for smoke or fumes.
4. Implement '**RACE**' program: **R**escue, **A**larm, **C**ontain and **E**xtinguish/Evacuate.
5. Rescue/remove residents from immediate danger.
6. Activate a call to local fire department at (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_if the fire alarm is not directly connected to the fire station.
7. Contain fire by shutting doors.
8. Extinguish and/or evacuate area.