



Amherstburg Fire Department

FIRE WATCH DUTIES



In the event that any fire alarm systems or sprinkler systems are off-line, a Fire Watch through the use of Fire Watch personnel is to be implemented immediately.

The Ontario Fire Code requires that buildings equipped with fire alarm systems and sprinkler systems be fully operational at all times. Therefore, in the event any of these systems are off-line for any reason whatsoever, a Fire Watch through the use of Fire Watch personnel is to be implemented **immediately**. During a Fire Watch, a responsible occupant, employee or contracted security guard actively looks for evidence of smoke and fire, listens for in-room smoke detectors sounding and, if smoke or fire is found, they are to contact the Amherstburg Fire Department, by calling **9-1-1**, and notify them of the emergency within the building.

The Fire Watch is only intended as a short term alternative that permits continued occupancy of the building. The Amherstburg Fire Department requires the **IMMEDIATE ACTION** of the building owner, business operator or management firm to arrange for corrective measures to be taken on the particular system which is temporarily out of service. Alternative measures for the temporary shutdown of the building's fire protection and life safety equipment are to be outlined within the fire department approved Fire Safety Plan for the building.

Definition: The term "Fire Watch" is used to describe a dedicated person or persons whose sole responsibility is to look for fires within an established area. Fire watch is required in the event of temporary failure of the fire alarm system or where activities require the interruption of any fire detection, suppression or alarm system component.

NOTE: All building occupants are to be notified in writing that the fire protection systems in the building are not functional and that a Fire Watch has been instituted until repairs have been made. See Sample "Fire Watch – Out of Service Signage"

1. At least one (1) qualified person shall be employed to complete fire watch duties of the unprotected building area whenever the building is occupied.
2. The elected Fire Watch personnel are to contact the Amherstburg Fire Department by calling 519-736-6500 to advise what fire protection system is off-line and that a Fire Watch has been implemented in the building. If the fire protection system is monitored by an outside agency, they are also to be notified that the system is off-line.
3. Fire Watch personnel are to post signage throughout the common areas of the building indicating what fire protection system is temporarily out of order and display the emergency evacuation procedures, as outlined within the approved Fire Safety Plan.
4. The Fire Watch must be continuous until the fire protection system is repaired and on-line. If the system(s) remains off-line for more than one day, notify the Amherstburg Fire Department of the status daily, by calling 519-736-6500.

5. Each person assigned to Fire Watch duties should be provided with the following equipment:
 1. Suitable means of communication (cell phone, portable radio, etc.) for notifying the Amherstburg Fire Department
 2. A portable air horn, whistle or other approved means of sounding an alarm
 3. Flashlight
 4. Clipboard and pen
 5. Copy of Fire Watch duties
 6. Copy of the Fire Watch Log Sheet
 7. Keys and/or access codes to provide entry to all rooms/spaces
 8. Floor plan(s) of the building under Fire Watch
 9. A list of persons requiring assistance in evacuation / special needs
6. Fire Watch personnel are to be familiar with the building and procedures for sounding an alarm and alerting the fire service in the event of a fire.
7. Fire Watch personnel must tour the entire building **each hour** and immediately document, upon the completion of each round, on the Fire Watch Log Sheet that the building inspection was completed. The person completing the rounds will record the time each round was completed and sign or initial each entry.
8. Fire watch personnel are to have fire extinguishing equipment readily available and be trained in its use.
9. If fire or smoke conditions are discovered, alert all building occupants by sounding a portable air horn, whistle or another device approved by the Chief Fire Official.
10. A telephone must be readily available at all times to notify the Amherstburg Fire Department by calling **9-1-1**. **Always call from a safe area.**
11. Do not attempt to extinguish the fire unless it is safe to do so.
12. Once building evacuation is completed, await emergency response personnel at a safe location and direct them to the scene. **Do not re-enter the building** without permission from the Amherstburg Fire Department.
13. "Hot works" such as welding or cutting shall be prohibited in the area where the sprinkler protection is impaired, or be limited to areas where approved precautions have been put into place.
14. While the sprinklers are shut down, assigned Fire Watch personnel shall patrol the area until both the fire alarm system and the sprinkler system have been restored.
15. Exit doors, access to exits and corridors are to be checked periodically for proper operation and obstructions while performing Fire Watch duties.
16. When the fire protection system(s) is restored and on-line, Fire Watch personnel must call the monitoring station, if fire protection system is monitored, and advise them to put the fire protection system(s) back on line.
17. Cancelling the fire watch is based on an assessment that the fire protection system(s) is fully operational – at which time the Amherstburg Fire Department must then be notified by calling 519-736-6500.