



**State of West Virginia  
Department of Homeland Security**

**STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE**  
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**FIRE WATCH**

Definition: **FIRE WATCH** – The assignment of a person or persons to an area for the express purpose of notifying the fire department, the building occupants, or both of an emergency, preventing a fire from occurring; extinguishing small fires; or protecting the public from fire or life safety dangers, as per NFPA 1 3.3.114.

**A Fire Watch is to be done when the fire alarm system or sprinkler system is inoperable for any reason.**

If you must start a Fire Watch, the West Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office, Inspection Division shall be notified. **You must notify the West Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office, Inspection Division when a Fire Watch is started and when the Fire Watch is completed. Their number is 304-558-2191 Ext. 20765.**

During the Fire Watch, staff will inspect every area of the facility. This will include all rooms, closets, loading dock, and the roof area. If you cannot see into the room, then you shall unlock the door and go into the room. The inspection will be documented on running logs only for the Fire Watch, this inspection shall happen at least every hour. **Since the entire facility needs to be checked within an hour, the Supervisor shall assign 2 people specifically for this matter only.** They will not be able to be counted on shift or counted for any other duty. They will only be doing the Fire Watch. The staff conducting a Fire Watch need to assist each other in completing the entire facility. This means that they must divide the facility for inspections. They shall log themselves into every area that they inspect. **COMPLIANCE TO THIS IS MANDATORY!** Noncompliance can result in prosecution and jail time.

The logs from a Fire Watch can be reviewed by the West Virginia State Fire Marshal when they do their inspections.

**The Fire Watch Shall:**

- 1. Continually patrol the area, structure of facility and document the patrol a minimum of once every hour.**
- 2. Be trained in the use of a fire extinguisher and have one accessible at all times.**
- 3. Be capable of communicating with the building occupants and the fire department to notify them about fires or other emergencies.**
- 4. Maintain a record of the Fire Watch for inspection by the West Virginia State Fire Marshal and Safety Committee.**

## FOR REFERENCE:

**NFPA 101 9.6.1.6\*** Where a required fire alarm system is out of service for more than 4 hours in a 24 hour period, the authority having jurisdiction shall be notified, and the building shall be evacuated or an approved fire watch shall be provided for all parties left unprotected by the shutdown until the fire alarm system or sprinkler system has been returned to service.

**NFPA 101-A 9.6.1.6** A fire watch should at least involve some special action beyond normal staffing, such as assigning an additional security guard(s) to walk the areas affected. These individuals should be specially trained in fire prevention and in occupant and fire department notification techniques, and they should understand the particular fire safety situation for public education purposes. *(Also see NFPA 601, Standard for Security Services in Fire Loss Prevention.)*

**NFPA 101 9.7.6.1** Where a required automatic sprinkler system is out of service for more than 4 hours in a 24 hour period, the authority having jurisdiction shall be notified, and the building shall be evacuated or an approved fire watch shall be provided for all parties left unprotected by the shutdown until the sprinkler system has been returned to service.

## INSPECTION OF PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS:

**NFPA 10 7.2.2. Procedures for Inspection:** **Monthly visual inspection by the facility.**  
**Annual inspection by SFMO licensed vendor.**

1. Location in designated place.
2. No obstruction to access or visibility.
3. Pressure gauge reading or indicator in the operable range or position.
4. Fullness determined by weighting or hefting for self-expelling-type extinguishers, cartridge-operated extinguishers, and pump tanks
5. Condition of tires, wheels, carriage, hose, and nozzle for wheeled extinguishers
6. Indicator for nonrechargeable extinguishers using push-to-test pressure indicators

**NFPA 10 7.2.2.1** In addition to 7.2.2 fire extinguishers shall be visually inspected in accordance with 7.2.2 if they are located where any of the following conditions exist:

1. High Frequency of fires in the past
2. Severe hazards
3. Locations that make fire extinguishers susceptible to mechanical or physical damage
4. Exposure to abnormal temperatures or corrosive atmospheres

**NFPA 10 7.2.2.2** Where required by 7.2.2 the following inspection procedures shall be in addition to those addressed in 7.2.2:

1. Operating instructions on nameplates are legible and face outward
2. Safety seals and tamper indicators are not broken or missing
3. Examination for obvious physical damage, corrosion, leakage, or clogged nozzle

**NFPA 10 7.2.3 Corrective Action:** When an inspection of any fire extinguisher reveals a deficiency in any of the conditions listed in 7.2.2 immediate corrective action shall be taken.