



Fire Marshal's Office - Richardson Fire Department

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Fire Watch Guidelines

[revised 05/08/2023]

The City of Richardson Fire Code, contains the following fire watch requirements:

FIRE WATCH. A temporary measure intended to ensure continuous and systematic surveillance of a building or portion thereof by one or more qualified individuals or standby personnel when required by the fire code official, for the purposes of identifying and controlling fire hazards, detecting early signs of unwanted fire, raising an alarm of fire and notifying the fire department.

403.11.1.1 Duty Times. Fire watch personnel shall remain on duty while places requiring a fire watch are open to the public, or when an activity requiring a fire watch is being conducted.

403.11.1.2 Duties. On-duty fire watch personnel shall have the following responsibilities:

- 1. Keep diligent watch for fires, obstructions to means of egress and other hazards.*
- 2. Take prompt measures for remediation of hazards and extinguishment of fires that occur.*
- 3. Take prompt measures to assist in the evacuation of the public from the structures.*

901.7 Systems Out of Service. Where a required fire protection system is out of service or in the event of an excessive number of activations, the fire department and the fire code official shall be notified immediately and, where required by the fire code official, the building shall either be evacuated or an approved fire watch shall be provided for all occupants left unprotected by the shut down until the fire protection system has been returned to service.

Where utilized, fire watches shall be provided with not less than one approved means for notification of the fire department and their only duty shall be to perform constant patrols of the protected premises and keep watch for fires.

901.7.1 Impairment coordinator. The building owner shall assign an impairment coordinator to comply with the requirements of this section. In the absence of a specific designee, the owner shall be considered the impairment coordinator.

901.7.2 Tag required. A tag shall be used to indicate that a system, or portion thereof, has been removed from service.

901.7.3 Placement of tag. The tag shall be posted at each fire department connection, system control valve, fire alarm control unit, fire alarm annunciator and fire command center, indicating which system, or part thereof, has been removed from service. The fire code official shall specify where the tag is to be placed.

901.7.4 Preplanned impairment programs. Preplanned impairments shall be authorized by the impairment coordinator. Before authorization is given, a designated individual shall be responsible for verifying that all of the following procedures have been implemented:

- 1. The extent and expected duration of the impairment have been determined.*
- 2. The areas or buildings involved have been inspected and the increased risks determined.*
- 3. Recommendations have been submitted to management or the building owner/manager.*
- 4. The fire department has been notified.*
- 5. The insurance carrier, the alarm company, the building owner/manager and other authorities having jurisdiction have been notified.*
- 6. The supervisors in the areas to be affected have been notified.*
- 7. A tag impairment system has been implemented.*
- 8. Necessary tools and materials have been assembled on the impairment site.*

901.7.5 Emergency impairments. Where unplanned impairments occur, appropriate emergency action shall be taken to minimize potential injury and damage. The impairment coordinator shall implement the steps outlined in Section 901.7.4.

901.7.6 Restoring systems to service. When impaired equipment is restored to normal working order, the impairment coordinator shall verify that all of the following procedures have been implemented:

- 1. Necessary inspections and tests have been conducted to verify that affected systems are operational.*
- 2. Supervisors have been advised that protection is restored.*
- 3. The fire department has been advised that protection is restored.*
- 4. The building owner/manager, insurance carrier, alarm company and other involved parties have been advised that protection is restored.*
- 5. The impairment tag has been removed.*