



Fire Watch Program & Procedures

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PURPOSE

A Fire Watch is implemented to ensure the fire safety of building occupants or a building area when the Fire Alarm System or a Fire Protection System has been temporarily disabled due to a system malfunction or maintenance. This program outlines the requirements of a Fire Watch within Norfolk State University's buildings where there is a temporary impairment of the Fire Alarm System or Fire Protection System. For the purpose of this document, a Fire Protection System shall mean a Fire Alarm System or Fire Suppression System.

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DEFINITIONS

Approved – approved by Norfolk State University's Department of Environmental Health and Safety

Audible Device – fire alarm bell or horn

Campus Police Dispatch – Norfolk State University's Campus Dispatch

Campus Police - Norfolk State University's Police and Security

Detection Device – heat detector, smoke detector, beam detector or smoke alarm

EHS&RM – Environmental Health, Safety & Risk Management

Fire Protection System – a system designed to detect and notify occupants of a fire or provide fire suppression or smoke control.

Fire Suppression System – a system designed to suppress or extinguish a fire.

NSU Employee – employed by the state of Virginia and/or Norfolk State University



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Visual Devices – visual warning device

Requirements to Implement a Fire Watch

The State of Virginia Fire Code requires that buildings equipped with fire alarm systems or sprinkler systems be always fully operational. Therefore, if any of these systems are offline, for any reason, a Fire Watch is to be initiated immediately. A Fire Watch is only intended as a short-term alternative that permits continued occupancy of the building while corrective measures are being implemented. If a Fire Watch is **not** possible, the building **shall not** be occupied.

Sprinkler Systems

In most buildings, the fire sprinkler system provides fire detection for the Fire Protection System. In the event that the sprinkler system is non-functional or is disabled for maintenance, a fire watch is required.

Standpipe or Fire Pump

A Fire Watch is not required when a standpipe system or fire pump is disabled or taken out of service. Whenever possible, EHS&RM must be notified prior to a shut down or immediately upon discovery of a disabled standpipe system or fire pump. EHS&RM and/or Campus Police will notify Norfolk Fire and Rescue.

Unoccupied Buildings

In a building that is unoccupied, where a Fire Protection System is offline, a Fire Watch is required unless otherwise approved by EHS&RM.

Notification to Building Occupants

When Fire Protection System is offline or maintenance is scheduled, building occupants are to be notified in writing or via email:

- A Fire Watch will be in place.
- The nature and duration of the outage.
- Emergency procedures during the outage.

Notification to Norfolk Fire Department

If a Fire Protection System will be offline for 10 hours within 24 hours, EHS&RM or Campus Police shall contact the City of Norfolk Fire & Rescue to advise what Fire Protection System is offline and that a Fire Watch has been implemented in the building.



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Hot Works

Hot works, such as welding or cutting, is prohibited in areas where the sprinkler system is impaired. If hot work cannot be avoided in areas where the sprinkler system is impaired, alternative precautions as approved by EHS&RM shall be implemented.

Fire Detection Bypass

If hot work, sanding or other activities will be carried out that may result in a false fire alarm activation, then the smoke and heat detectors in the area are to be bypassed. While these detectors are bypassed, a Fire Watch is required. The persons performing the work in the area are permitted to carry out the Fire Watch provided they have been informed of how to activate the building's Fire Protection System in the event that fire or smoke is found.

If the bypass is limited to the area where the work is being done and is not accessible to other building users, then a notification to building occupants and City of Norfolk Fire and Rescue is not required.

Trouble Condition on a Fire Alarm Panel

When a trouble condition occurs on a Fire Protection System, the "Trouble" light illuminates, the panel will beep and the display will indicate the nature of the trouble signal. The Campus Police Dispatcher will receive a notification so that appropriate resources can be dispatched to investigate the issue. The Campus Police Dispatcher will place a call to the on-call EHS&RM Officer stating the nature of the trouble signal.

Once a trouble signal is set on a Fire Protection System, the EHS&RM will not receive notifications of subsequent faults that generate a trouble signal. This presents a significant problem if a subsequent trouble condition significantly impairs the fire alarm system. If a trouble signal has been acknowledged and silenced at the Fire Alarm Panel, the "Trouble" light will remain lit and the display will indicate the most recent trouble condition. A subsequent trouble signal will re-activate the audible beeping on the Fire Alarm Panel and the display will indicate the nature of the new trouble signal.

If a trouble signal/light remains active on the fire alarm panel for more than one hour, then a modified Fire Watch is required.

Fire Watch Personnel

Approved and trained security staff, Campus Police, or NSU employees may perform a Fire Watch. Persons not directly employed by Norfolk State University must be approved by Campus Police and/or EHS&RM.



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At least one person shall complete Fire Watch duties in all unprotected portions of the building. Fire Watch personnel are to be familiar with the building and procedures for sounding an alarm and alerting the fire department in the event of a fire. Unless otherwise approved, the person(s) conducting a Fire Watch shall have no other duties.

Equipment Required for Fire Watch

Each person assigned to Fire Watch duties shall be provided with the following equipment:

- Suitable means of communication (cell phone, portable radio, etc.) for notifying the Campus Police Dispatch or the Norfolk Fire and Rescue.
- A portable air horn and whistle or other approved means of sounding an alarm (a whistle is required for when the air horn runs out of air)
- Flashlight
- Copy of appropriate section of Fire Watch Procedures (Page 5-8)
- Copy of the Fire Watch Log Sheet (located at the end of this document)
- Keys and/or access codes to provide entry to all rooms/spaces.
- Floor plans for the building under Fire Watch

Call Tree for Fire Related Incident

All personnel are directed to call NSU Campus Police and/or NSU Campus Dispatch at 3-8102 (757-823-8102) for all fire related issues.

- NSU Dispatch will call the Local Norfolk Fire Department.
- NSU Campus Police and/or NSU Campus Dispatch will call the On-call EHS Safety and Compliance Officer.
- The On-Call EHS Safety and Compliance Officer will call the Associate Vice President of Facilities Management.
- The Associate Vice President of Facilities Management will call the Vice President of Finance and Administration.

Cancellation of a Fire Watch

Cancelling a Fire Watch shall be based on an assessment by a Qualified Fire Protection System Technician who states that the fire alarm system or sprinkler system is operational.

Norfolk Fire and Rescue shall be notified when a Fire Watch lasting less than 24 hours is cancelled. This notification may be done by EHS&RM and/or Campus Police.



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Fire Watch Procedures

The following section provides directions for various situations where a Fire Alarms system or Fire Suppression System is not functional. Variations from these procedures must be approved by EHS&RM.

1. No Detection, No Audible Devices, Visual Devices:

- When the detectors, audible devices and Fire Panel are offline, a general fire watch is required.
- The Fire Watch must be continuous until the Fire Protection System is repaired and online. The person conducting the fire watch may not leave the premises unless authorized by EHS&RM and/or Campus Police.
- Fire Watch personnel must tour all unprotected portions of the building at a minimum of once each hour by actively looking for evidence of smoke and fire. Fire Watch inspections shall be continuous.
- Once each hour, the person conducting the Fire Watch shall fill out the Fire Watch Log.
- In locations where construction or maintenance activities are occurring, exit doors, access to exits and corridors shall be checked periodically for proper operation and obstructions.

If Fire or Smoke Conditions are discovered:

- Repeatedly sound three long blasts of an air horn or whistle and yell 'Fire, Fire Fire.'
- Leave the fire area and close doors.
- From a safe location, notify Campus Police via radio or 757-823-8350.
- Continue notifying all areas of the building, if it is safe to do so.
- Evacuate the building via the nearest safe exit – DO NOT use the elevator.
- Await the arrival of the Norfolk Fire Department and Campus Police and advise them of conditions inside the building.
- No one shall re-enter the building until the 'ALL CLEAR' has been given by the Fire Department as communicated by the Campus Police.

2. No Detection Devices, Pull Stations are Working, Audible Devices Are Working:

- If the fire detection devices are not functional but the fire alarm pull stations and audible devices are working, the person conducting the Fire Watch is required to patrol all portions of the building that do not have proper detection.
- The Fire Watch must be continuous until the Fire Protection System is repaired and online. The person conducting the Fire Watch may not leave the premises unless authorized by EHS&RM and/or Campus Police.



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- Fire Watch personnel must tour all unprotected portions of the building at a minimum of once each hour actively looking for evidence of smoke and fire. Fire Watch inspections shall be continuous.
- Once each hour, the person conducting the Fire Watch shall fill out the Fire Watch Log.
- In locations where construction or maintenance activities are occurring, exit doors, access to exits and corridors shall be checked periodically for proper operation and obstructions.

If Fire or Smoke Conditions are discovered:

- Leave the fire area immediately and close doors.
- Activate the building's Fire Protection System by using the nearest pull station.
- From a safe location, notify Campus Police Dispatch via radio or 757-823-8350
- Evacuate the building via the nearest safe exit – DO NOT use the elevator.
- Await the arrival of the Fire Department and Campus Police to advise concerning the conditions inside the building.
- No one shall re-enter the building until the 'ALL CLEAR' has been given by the Fire Department as communicated by the EHS&RM and/or Campus Police.

3. Sprinkler System Not Functional, Fire Alarm System Is Working:

- If the fire sprinkler system provides fire detection for the Fire Protection System (most cases) and is out of service, the Fire Watch person is required to patrol all portions of the building that do not have working sprinklers.
- The Fire Watch must be continuous until the sprinkler system is repaired and online. The person conducting the Fire Watch may not leave the premises unless authorized by the EHS&RM and/or Campus Police.
- Fire Watch personnel must tour all unprotected portions of the building at a minimum of once each hour actively looking for evidence of smoke and fire. Fire Watch inspections shall be continuous.
- Once each hour, the person conducting the Fire Watch shall fill out the Fire Watch Log.
- In locations where construction or maintenance activities are occurring, exit doors, access to exits and corridors shall be checked periodically for proper operation and obstructions.

If Fire or Smoke Conditions are discovered:

- Leave the fire area immediately and close doors.
- Activate the building's Fire Protection System by using the nearest pull station.
- Evacuate the building via the nearest safe exit – DO NOT use the elevator.
- From a safe location notify Campus Police via radio or 757-823-8350.
- Await the arrival of the Fire Department and Campus Police.



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- No one shall re-enter the building until the 'ALL CLEAR' has been given by the Fire Department as communicated by EHS&RM and/or Campus Police.
- 4. Trouble on Fire Alarm System:**
- When a trouble condition occurs on a fire alarm system, the "Trouble" is displayed on the Fire Alarm Panel or an LED labeled "Trouble" will illuminate. The panel will beep and the display will indicate the nature of the trouble signal.
 - If a fire alarm technician has acknowledged the trouble signal and silenced at the Fire Alarm Panel, the panel will continue to display the word "Trouble" or illuminate the "Trouble" LED.
 - A new trouble signal will re-activate the audible beeping on the Fire Alarm Panel and the display will indicate the nature of the new trouble signal.
- 5. If a new trouble condition occurs**
- A new trouble condition can be identified by the audible beeping coming from the Fire Alarm Panel.
 - Campus Police shall be notified if a new trouble condition is noted. 757-823-8350.
 - The Fire Alarm Panel shall be checked at a minimum of once every hour to determine if a new trouble condition has occurred.
 - The person checking the Fire Alarm Panel does not need to stay in the building and can perform other tasks between checks.



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NSU Fire Watch Log

Name of Building			
Area Under Fire Watch			
All Areas under Fire Watch must be inspected and documented at least once each hour on this log. Please Note: Please forward a copy of this document(s) to EHS&RM.			
Date	Time	Fire Watcher	Signature
Comments:			