



Duke Occupational & Environmental Safety Office

Standard Operating Procedure	Author: Joe Rojo	Owner: OESO Fire & Life Safety
Subject: Fire Watch Program	Approved By: Matthew Stiegel	Date Effective: 12/5/24
	Revision Dates: 6/11/2024	

Purpose: To establish procedures and assign responsibilities and requirements to ensure a comprehensive program exists to assign fire watch requirements during major automatic detection, suppression, and sprinkler system outages for Duke University and Duke University Health System. The objective of the Fire Watch Program is to eliminate the potential loss of life, property, injuries, and to protect the employees, visitors, patients, and students during system outages.

Definition: Fire Watch - A temporary measure enacted to ensure continuous and systematic surveillance of a building or portion thereof by one or more qualified individuals for the purpose of identifying and controlling fire hazards, detecting early signs of unwanted fire, raising an alarm of fire and notifying the fire department. (Ref. NC Fire Code)

Responsibilities: The Fire Watch Program will be implemented in accordance with all applicable fire and life safety codes. OESO Fire & Life Safety will serve as the primary consultative resource when determining the necessity of the fire watch initiative.

Note: The City of Durham Fire Marshal's office (the local fire code official) is the ultimate Authority Having Jurisdiction in determining the need for a fire watch. Duke University and Duke University Health System administrators are responsible for the implementation of the Fire Watch Program through their respective agents, to include employees, contractors, and tenants.

Procedures:

Initiation Requirements

1. A fire watch will be initiated under the following circumstances:
 - a. The fire alarm system is out-of-service more than 4 hours in a 24-hour period.
 - b. The fire suppression or sprinkler system is impaired more than 10 hours within a 24-hour period; or system failure of the fire alarm control panel or monitoring capabilities for more than one hour.
 - c. When a risk analysis determines a need outside the conditions noted above.
2. When a fire watch is required by code, it is implemented as an interim life safety measure (one of 14 administrative functions available for risk mitigation within Duke Fire Safety Instruction 1-12, Interim Life Safety Measures Program).

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Fire watch personnel shall have the following responsibilities:
 - a. Monitor for fires and other hazards throughout all affected areas.
 - b. Take prompt action to extinguish incipient fires and remediate hazards.
 - c. Take prompt action to assist with the evacuation of the public from the structure.

- d. Maintain a reliable means of communication to notify emergency dispatch personnel of fires.
- e. Maintain a fire watch building tour record.

Fire Watch Termination

1. Upon successful completion of required work on automatic detection, suppression, and sprinkler systems, the Duke agent responsible for the work will confirm the full operability of the affected system.
2. The responsible Duke agent, through the Interim Life Safety Measure Program process, will advise the appropriate fire and life safety specialist that the required work has been completed and the impaired system has been returned to full operational condition.
3. The appropriate fire and life safety specialist will rescind the fire watch.
4. The responsible Duke agent, through the Interim Life Safety Measure Program process, will provide the appropriate fire and life safety specialist with all fire watch building tour records no later than 12:00 p.m., on the day after the fire watch has been rescinded.