

Knox County Fire Prevention Bureau

Fire Watch Policies and Procedures for buildings with “out of service” fire protection/detection systems

International Fire Code Section:

901.7 Systems out of service. Where a required or otherwise installed fire protection system is out of service, 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 at least one approved means for notification of 911 and their only duty shall be to perform constant patrols of the protected premises and keep watch for fires.

International Fire Code Chapter 2 Definitions:

FIRE WATCH. A temporary measure intended to ensure continuous and systematic surveillance of a building or portion thereof by one or more qualified individuals 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.

Approved fire watch (As determined by the Knox County Fire Code Official. The fire watch must be approved prior to assuming duty.)

1. One or more state licensed fire protection contractor(s) for the affected fire protection/detection system.
2. One or more licensed security contractor(s).
3. One or more professionally trained fire fighter(s).
4. One or more professionally trained Law Enforcement Officer(s).

Duties and responsibilities of an approved fire watch

1. Fire watches shall be provided with at least one approved means for notification of the fire department.
2. Their only duty shall be to perform constant patrols of the protected premises and keep watch for fires.
3. In the event of fire or other emergency the fire watch shall raise the alarm, assist with the evacuation of the building, and notify the fire department by calling 911.
4. When the facility fire protection/detection system has been restored to service and prior to departing the facility the fire watch shall notify the fire code official by contacting the Knox County Fire Prevention Bureau at 215-4660 during normal business hours or the Rural Metro Fire Department Dispatch Center at 675-4600 after normal business hours, on weekends, and holidays.