

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE 5. FIRE WATCH

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 To establish guidelines for activating and de-activating a Fire Watch due to operating issues associated with a University of Pennsylvania building Fire Protection System.

1.1.1 Fire detection systems, such as our building fire alarms, serve as our "sentry" to immediately alert building occupants whenever smoke and/or fire is present. If the alarms are malfunctioning in any manner, the early detection and alarm capabilities can be compromised.

1.1.2 The Division of Public Safety (DPS) requires that a Fire Watch be established whenever it is confirmed that the fire protection systems in a building are malfunctioning or that a substantial portion of the building's fire alarm system has been disabled.

1.1.3 There are also other instances where Fire Watches could be instituted, e.g. during Hot Work or at construction sites.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

2.1 **Fire Watch:** A temporary measure establishing 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, alerting building occupants to the fire, and notifying the fire department.

A Fire Watch may be required when fire protection systems in a building or a portion thereof, have been disabled for testing, inspection, or maintenance or due to construction in the building.

2.2 Problem Fire Alarms

2.2.1 The building fire alarm devices have been activated, but no signal has been received back at PennComm.

2.2.2 A fire alarm signal has been received at PennComm, but the building devices have not actually been activated.

2.2.3 The building fire alarm devices are not operating properly, in whole or in part, because they are malfunctioning or have been disabled.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

3.1 The DPS seeks to maintain proper operation of our campus fire alarms. Whenever any substantial element of the fire protection system has been disabled or is otherwise determined to be malfunctioning as per this guideline, a Fire Watch shall be activated. A Fire Watch will also be activated if required by City of Philadelphia officials.

3.2 Duties of Fire Watch

- 3.2.1** A sufficient number of Fire Watch personnel shall be on duty to ensure that all areas of a property are inspected every 30 minutes. In multi-story buildings there shall be at least one Fire Watch for every five (5) floors.
- 3.2.2** At the beginning of the Fire Watch, Fire Watch personnel shall notify occupants of the temporary means by which they will be notified if the need to evacuate should occur.
- 3.2.3** Fire Watch personnel shall inspect for smoke and fire, and if found, immediately notify PennComm and commence evacuation of the property. If the fire alarm system is out of service, a compressed air horn or a similar loud sounding device shall be used to alert occupants to evacuate the building.
- 3.2.4** Fire Watch personnel shall carry a whistle/horn and a flashlight where areas of the building are not lit.

4.0 PROCEDURES

4.1 PennComm

- 4.1.1** Two (2) or more unwarranted activations within **one hour**: Whenever a building fire alarm malfunction as described in section 2.2.1, 2.2.2, or 2.2.3 occurs, the Facilities and Real Estate (FRES) Operations Control Center (OCC) is required to conduct an electrical operator's (EO) investigation. PennComm shall determine the results of that investigation and proceed as set forth below.
 - If the EO is unavailable or can't resolve problem, the fire alarm system maintenance controller shall be notified (currently N-tech).
 - If N-tech determines that a telecommunications problem is the cause, Information Systems and Computing (ISC) should be notified.
 - Fire and Emergency Services (FES) shall be notified next business day, via daily sending and receiving sheets (S&R).
 - If the problem cannot be resolved and a Fire Watch is indicated, immediately notify FES.
 - Fire Watch will generally be staffed and conducted by the university's security service contractor. The security services contractor's services are coordinated through the DPS.
 - The university's security service supervisor will remain in direct contact with FES throughout Fire Watch and update as needed.

- 4.1.2** Other unusual circumstances and/or timeframes:
 - Should a situation arise that cannot be addressed on the basis of these guidelines, gather all available information from OCC and N-tech, and contact FES personnel for recommendations on how to proceed.

4.2 Fire and Emergency Services

- 4.2.1** If the decision is made to implement a Fire Watch, FES shall assume responsibility along with The university's security service contractor for overseeing and managing the Fire Watch.

4.2.2 FES will maintain contact with FRES, OCC and university contractor's in order to keep an open line of communication during the Fire Watch and to end the Fire Watch when the problem is solved.

4.2.2 FES may require a Fire Watch if problem alarms cannot be rectified or in other appropriate circumstances.

4.2.3 FES will terminate the Fire Watch when the issue is resolved.

4.3 Security Services Contractor

4.3.1 During a Fire Watch, Security Services Contractor will perform the tactical objectives.

4.3.2 Dispatch appropriate trained personnel for Fire Watch.

4.3.3 Maintain the Fire Watch in accordance with these guidelines and Philadelphia Fire Code regulations until proper clearance has been given by FES.

4.3.4 Once the Fire Watch has ended, and FES gives the order to do so, inform building occupant(s) that the Fire Watch has been terminated.

4.3.5 Ensure proper documentation of associated activities and/or notifications.

5.0 GENERAL REFERENCES

5.1 Philadelphia Fire Code 2018, Chapter 9 – Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems

5.2 Philadelphia Fire Code 2018, Chapter 33 – Fire Safety during Construction and Demolition

5.3 Philadelphia Fire Code 2018, Chapter 35 – Welding and Other Hot Work

5.4 NFPA Standard 601

6.0 CONTACT INFORMATION

6.1 For question regarding this guideline contact Fire and Emergency Services at (215) 573-7857 or FES@publicsafety.upenn.edu

