

Huntington Beach Fire Department

Fire Watch Requirements

1. OVERVIEW

This specification establishes the procedures to follow in the event a business voluntarily enters into fire watch, or is placed on fire watch by Huntington Beach Fire Department personnel.

Not covered in this specification:

- Fire watch for construction or demolition of buildings (HBFC (CFC) Section 3304.5).
- Fire watch for motion picture filming where solid-ceiling sets and platforms exist (HBFC (CFC) Section 4805.3).
- Fire watch required for hot works (welding) operations (HBFC (CFC) Section 3504.2).

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. Fire Watch** - A Fire Watch is a temporary measure intended to ensure continuous and systematic surveillance of an activity, 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. See HBFC (CFC) Section 202.
- 2.2. Fire Watch Order** - The assignment of a responsible person or persons to provide continuous patrol of a building, area or premises for the purpose of detecting fires and transmitting an immediate alarm to the building occupants and Fire Department.
- 2.3. Nuisance Alarm** - Any alarm caused by mechanical failure, malfunction, improper installation, or lack of proper maintenance, or any alarm activated by a cause that cannot be determined. See HBFC (CFC) Section 202.
- 2.4. Fire Code Official** - The Huntington Beach Fire Department (HBFD) Fire Chief or other designated authority charged with the administration and enforcement of the code, or a duly authorized representative. See HBFC (CFC) Section 202.

3. AUTHORITY

Fire Watch is required under the Huntington Beach Fire Code (HBFC) (CFC, as amended and adopted) for the following:

Fire Watch Standards

- 3.1. Fire Protection and Life Safety Systems.** Fire watch may be authorized for systems out of service in accordance with HBFC (CFC) Section 901.7 - Where a required fire protection system (such as a Fire Alarm System or Automatic Fire Sprinkler 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 shutdown until the fire protection system has been returned to service.
- 3.2. Nuisance alarms.** If a business or operation is generating excessive nuisance alarms, in addition to fees per master fee schedule, the business may be required by the fire code official to disable fire protection systems and therefore shall also be required to meet requirements of HBFC (CFC) Section 901.7 for fire watch. (See HBFC 901.11)

4. GENERAL

- 4.1. Less than 24 hours**
- 4.1.1. When a fire system is out of service for less than 24 hours for an impairment that is not part of an approved notification and impairment management program, the business shall establish a fire watch in accordance with HBFC (CFC) Section 901.7.
- 4.1.2. The owner, lessee or agent shall notify the Fire Department via email (fireprevention@surfcity-hb.org) with address, system impacted, and details on when the impairment will be repaired.
- 4.1.3. The owner, lessee or agent shall provide proof that the repair was completed by a licensed professional within 24 hours of completing the repair via email (fireprevention@surfcity-hb.org) or Accela Citizen's Access (if available).
- 4.2. Greater than 24 hours**
- 4.2.1. Once a fire system is out of service greater than 24 hours including planned impairments, the business is required to notify the HBFD that the system is out of service and fire watch is in place. The business is required to follow all procedures established in this policy.
- 4.2.2. When the HBFD determines the need for a fire watch, the fire department personnel shall inform the owner, lessee, or agent both verbally and via email. This email will contain general directions on establishing a fire watch and will include a copy of City Specification No. 435. If no email is available, a hardcopy of the order shall be provided.

Fire Watch Standards

4.2.3. In all cases, fire watch shall be initiated immediately, and the owner, lessee, or agent shall immediately contact a fire watch vendor and/or submit an affidavit (Attachment 1). If electronic means are not available, a manual form with the fire watch orders shall be provided and shall be submitted to the fire department daily via fax or in person.

4.2.4. The Community Risk Reduction Division shall be notified, and will follow up with a formal violation notice including fire watch orders. These orders shall stay in place until no violation(s) remain and a final report from the licensed contractor is provided to the Hbfd. A final report acknowledging the lifting of fire watch orders shall be provided to the owner, lessee or agent.

5. FIRE WATCH PERSONNEL

5.1. Fire watch personnel shall be from a licensed security firm, registered as a security officer in the state of California who has a valid Huntington Beach business license, or who can provide an affidavit of qualifications and approved by the fire code official [Attachment 1], who meets all criteria listed in Section 5.2 below.

5.2. Criteria. Fire watch personnel shall meet the following criteria:

5.2.1. Be able to communicate effectively;

5.2.2. Be thoroughly familiar with the area they are patrolling;

5.2.3. Patrol their designated area continuously, without encumbrances in accordance with Section 7.

5.2.4. Make reports as instructed. A written record of patrol rounds and any significant information shall be recorded in accordance with the Fire Watch log below and submitted electronically as directed.

5.2.5. Alert building occupants of an emergency and direct evacuation when required.

5.2.6. Fire watch personnel who do not meet criteria 5.1.2.1 thru 5.1.2.5 shall not be assigned fire watch.

5.3. Fire watch personnel shall have access to a working cell phone; know the exact address of the property, and how to report a fire or other emergency condition by calling 9-1-1.

5.4. Fire watch personnel shall be trained in the use of fire extinguishers, shall have access to all facility fire extinguishers, and know the fire extinguisher locations.

5.5. Fire watch personnel shall have knowledge of and be trained in the facility's evacuation plan in the event of a fire. They shall be able to communicate with occupants well enough to give an evacuation order.

Fire Watch Standards

6. DUTIES

6.1. General duties.

6.1.1. Conduct continuous, periodic patrols, regardless whether the building is occupied, of the interior and exterior of the entire building as specified. Fire watch personnel shall not have other responsibilities, and shall not be distracted nor stationary for long periods of time.

6.1.2. During the patrol rounds, fire watch personnel shall make a thorough inspection of the building or spaces assigned to him/her noting any observations that could impact the safety or safe evacuation of occupants.

6.1.3. Immediately report all discovered fire hazards to owner, agent or lessee for immediate correction, and maintain a record of these communications.

6.1.4. Maintain a log of fire watch activities including hazards found, when and to whom they were reported.

6.1.5. Upload log to system by 0800. See Section 9 for recordkeeping requirements

6.2. In the event of fire or odor of smoke.

6.2.1. Immediately notify the Huntington Beach Fire Department by calling 9-1-1 with the exact address and the extent of fire involvement.

6.2.2. Notify the occupants of the facility of the need to evacuate. If the sirens or public address function of the alarm system are still functional, use them to assist with the evacuation of the building.

6.3. Fire watch personnel shall not have other duties besides their assigned fire watch, unless directed by the Fire Department. The fire watch will not perform fire-fighting duties beyond the scope of the ordinary citizen.

7. Frequency of Inspection

7.1. Buildings or activities shall have a fire watch patrol continuously and record once an hour, unless criteria in Section 7.2 applies.

7.2. Fire watch personnel shall patrol the entire building or activity every 30 minutes in the following situations:

7.2.1. The building or activity has people sleeping.

7.2.2. The building or activity is an institutional occupancy.

Fire Watch Standards

7.2.3. The building or activity is an occupied assembly occupancy.

8. Number of Fire Watch Personnel

- 8.1. The number of fire watch personnel shall be determined based on the size of the facility and ability to meet the inspection frequency in Section 7.
- 8.2. The fire code official has the right to require additional fire watch personnel based on a number of risk factors including size, complexity, fuel load, sleeping spaces, and other factors.

9. Record Keeping

- 9.1. A fire watch log shall be maintained at the facility in physical or electronic format. The log shall be electronically submitted daily by 0700 of each full or partial fire watch day. The log on site must be available for viewing and inspection by the HBFD at all times during the fire watch. The log will show the following;
 - 9.1.1. The address of the facility.
 - 9.1.2. Times the patrol has commenced for each tour of the facility.
 - 9.1.3. Name of the person(s) conducting the fire watch.
 - 9.1.4. Record of any communication(s) to the Fire Department and/or monitoring company.
 - 9.1.5. Record of any unsafe conditions.
 - 9.1.6. Record of any corrective actions taken to remedy any unsafe conditions.
 - 9.1.7. Record of other information as directed by the Fire Department.
- 9.2. The log shall be submitted daily in an electronic format (Adobe PDF using the template or photo using the online form).

10. Failure to Comply

- 10.1. Failure to submit daily log by 0800 shall result in an inspection, billed at a minimum of 0.5 hours at the hourly rate in the Council-approved master fee schedule.
- 10.2. Failure to perform fire watch duties as directed shall result in enforcement, which may include inspection, billed at a minimum of 0.5 hours at the hourly rate in the Council-approved master fee schedule, or civil citations with fines in accordance with HBMC.

Fire Watch Standards

11. Cancelling Fire Watch

- 11.1. The owner, agent or lessee may request to cancel the Fire Watch once the activity requiring the Fire Watch has concluded and all attendees have left the premises, or fire alarm and/or the fire suppression system(s) has been fully restored.
- 11.2. The owner, agent or lessee must notify the HBFD and may receive a final inspection to verify that there is no further need for fire watch.
- 11.3. A written inspection report shall be provided to the building owner or agent of record (electronic report) at the end of fire watch, and the fire watch violation shall be moved to compliant. If an electronic report is not provided, contact the HBFD CRR Division's assigned Fire Inspector. Physical paper reports may be mailed upon request.

APPROVED: 
Scott M. Haberle, Fire Chief

DATE: 09/06/2022

- Attachment 1 - Affidavit and Qualification & Agreement of Duties for Fire Watch Personnel
- Attachment 2 - Fire Watch Log
- Attachment 3 - Fire Watch Order (Example)
- Attachment 4 – Rescind Fire Watch Order (Example)

Fire Watch Standards**ATTACHMENT 1 - AFFIDAVIT****Affidavit of Qualification & Agreement of Duties for Fire Watch Personnel**

1. My name is _____, my title is _____ and I represent _____.
2. The name of the fire watch person is _____.
3. I certify that that the person named in #2 above meets the following requirements:
 - a. Is able to communicate effectively;
 - b. Is thoroughly familiar with the area they are patrolling;
 - c. Will patrol their designated area continuously, and will remain vigilant and engaged in this specific fire watch duty, and no other duties.
 - d. Will make reports as instructed. A written record of patrol rounds and any significant information shall be recorded in accordance with a hard copy Fire Watch Log as provided and submitted electronically as directed.
 - e. Alert building occupants of an emergency and direct evacuation when required.
4. I certify the person named in #2 above has the following tools and experience:
 - a. They shall have access to a working cell phone; know the exact address of the property, and how to report a fire or other emergency condition by calling 9-1-1.
 - b. They shall be trained in the use of fire extinguishers, shall have access to all facility fire extinguishers, and know the fire extinguisher locations.
 - c. They shall have knowledge of and be trained in the facility's evacuation plan in the event of a fire. He/she shall be able to communicate with occupants well enough to give an evacuation order.
5. I am legally authorized to certify this information on behalf of the company identified in #1.

Under penalty of perjury, I certify that the information presented in this affidavit is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I further understand that providing false representation herein may result in non-compliance with the HB Fire Code and subject to Administrative Citations including fines up to \$1,000 per day and other legal remedies in accordance with the laws of California.

Signed

Date: _____

Return this Affidavit to the Community Risk Reduction Division, fireprevention@surfcity-hb.org.

Fire Watch Standards

ATTACHMENT 2 – FIRE WATCH LOG



Huntington Beach Fire Department
Community Risk Reduction (CRR) Division

Fire Watch Daily Log Sheet

Business: _____ Start Date: ____/____/____

Address: _____ Fire watch Contact Phone #: _____

RESPONSIBILITIES: The responsibilities of fire watch personnel include performing constant patrols of the premises to keep watch for fires; maintaining a means of communication with the 911 Dispatch Center; reporting all fires to the 911 Dispatch Center; remaining accessible via telephone; be easily identified; and log **hourly (or 30 min for people sleeping, institutions, or occupied assemblies)** actions during fire watch. See reverse for list of duties and City Specification 402, Fire Watch Requirements for more information.

TIME	NAME/ORG	FINDINGS / ACTIONS ¹
00:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
01:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
02:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
03:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
04:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
05:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
06:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
07:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
08:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
09:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
10:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
11:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
12:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
13:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
14:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
15:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
16:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
17:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
18:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
19:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
20:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
21:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
22:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK
23:00		<input type="checkbox"/> All OK

All log sheets shall promptly be returned to the Huntington Beach Fire Department's CRR Division following 7:00 AM via the ~~Accela~~ Citizen's Access customer portal (<https://engage.huntingtonbeachca.gov/CitizenAccess/Welcome.aspx>)

Fire Watch Contact Signature: _____

Fire Watch Standards**ATTACHMENT 3 – FIRE WATCH ORDER****FIRE WATCH ORDER**

[Business Owner] or [Building Owner]

Order to Comply

In accordance with City Specification No.402, Fire Watch Requirements, you are hereby ordered to immediately establish an approved 24-hour a day continuous fire watch at the subject building or location.

The fire watch shall remain on the premises until the fire code official verifies that fire and life safety system meets all applicable standards and is fully operational and/or the fire watch is no longer needed. **The fire watch ORDER cannot be rescinded verbally. A written (electronic) report shall be provided and is the only method for lifting this ORDER.**

A copy of the City Specification No.402, including all requirements and penalties for non-compliance can be downloaded at <https://www.huntingtonbeachca.gov/files/users/fire/402.pdf>

Submitted by [Inspector Name]

Signed by [Fire Marshal]

Fire Watch Standards

ATTACHMENT 4 – RESCIND FIRE WATCH ORDER

RESCIND FIRE WATCH ORDER

[Business Owner] or [Building Owner]

The fire code official has determined that all requirements have been met and fire watch has been lifted.

If the fire watch included a requirement to submit Inspection, Test and Maintenance records in accordance with CFC as adopted, these records shall be submitted by the licensed contractor to The Compliance Engine within 30 days.

Submitted by [Inspector Name]

Signed by [Fire Marshal]