

Brunswick County
Code Administration Department / Fire Marshal's Office
75 Courthouse Drive NE Building "1"
P.O. Box 249
Bolivia, NC 28422
910.253.2041 Office
910.253.2024 Fax

FIRE WATCH AGREEMENT

In accordance with the State Fire Code, The Brunswick County Fire Marshal's Office requires a Fire Watch to be conducted any time a fire alarm system or fire protection system is out of service or where a fire alarm or fire protection system has a preplanned impairment or emergency impairment that would prevent the system from functioning as designed. The entire facility shall be continuously monitored by roving Fire Watch personnel, with areas being observed hourly.

A log shall be kept detailing the date, time and signature of the person conducting the Fire Watch and any abnormal conditions.

Where a fire alarm system or fire protection system is impaired either from a preplanning event or emergency impairment additional mitigation actions would be required by the owner, operator, or tenant until the system(s) has been repaired and returned to normal status.

Fire Watch Duties

The Brunswick County Fire Marshal's Office or designee may require a building owner to provide a fire watch if a fire protection system fails, if there are an excessive number of accidental activations or nuisance alarms, system impairment, or special circumstance or event. Personnel to conduct the fire watch are determined by the building owner.

Definition of Fire Watch

The assignment of a person or persons to an area for the express purpose of notifying the fire department and/or building occupants of an emergency, preventing a fire from occurring, extinguishing small fires, or protecting the public from fire or life safety dangers.

Requirements of the NC State Fire Prevention Code

Fire Alarm and/or Sprinkler System Shutdown

NFPA 101 – NCSFC Section 901.7- Where a required 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 shutdown until the fire protection system has been returned to service.

Owner Responsibilities

- a. Establish, instruct and maintain fire watch personnel.
- b. Notify the fire alarm monitoring company.
- c. Notify the Brunswick County 911 Dispatch Center at (910)253-7490 and the Brunswick County Fire Marshal's Office that the system is not working and again when the system is restored. (910) 253-2041 or email Fire.marshall@brunswickcountync.gov
- d. Contact a licensed and qualified contractor to fix the fire protection system(s).
- e. If a Notice of Violation or Civil Citation has been issued, contact the designated Fire Marshal when the system has been repaired.

Personnel serving as a fire watch must have the following duties

- a. Conduct periodic patrols of the entire facility as specified.
- b. Identify any fire, life or property hazards.
- c. Notify the Fire Department if a fire is discovered by calling 911 with the exact address and type of emergency.
- d. Notify 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 evacuation of the building.
- e. Determine at least one means of direct communication with the Fire Department. A telephone or radio is acceptable.
- f. Maintain a log of fire watch activities.
- g. Have knowledge of the location and use of fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers.
- h. Fire watch personnel cannot have other duties besides their assigned fire watch. However, the Fire Department may designate other duties.

NOTE: The fire watch will not perform fire-fighting duties beyond the scope of the ordinary citizen.

Frequency of Inspections

Fire watch personnel should patrol the entire facility every 15 minutes in the following situations.

- a. The facility has people sleeping
- b. The facility is an institutional occupancy.

The facility is occupied assembly occupancy. Facilities that do not meet the requirements for a 15-minute patrol frequency should have a fire watch patrol every 1 hour/60-minutes.

Record Keeping

A fire watch log should be maintained at the facility. The log must be available at all times during the fire watch and should show the following:

1. Address of the facility.
2. Times that the patrol has completed each tour of the facility.
3. Name of the person conducting the fire watch.
4. Record of communication(s) to the fire department and monitoring company.
5. Record of other information as directed by the fire department personnel.

Preplanned Impairments and/or emergency impairments

The building owner shall assign an impairment coordinator when either a preplanned or emergency impairment occurs to a fire protection system or fire alarm system. In the absence of a specific designee, the owner shall be considered the impairment coordinator. The owner or designated individual would be responsible for the following actions:

- Work with fire code officials and fire protection service companies to establish the extent and expected duration of the impairment.
- Have areas or buildings involved inspected by a fire code official and have the increased risk from the impairment determined by the fire code official via a fire inspection report. The fire code official shall specify where impairment tag(s) are to be placed. The fire code official shall convey via the report any additional emergency actions necessary to minimize potential injury or damage.
- Submit recommendations and corrective actions from the fire inspection report to the owner/manager.
- Notify the local fire department of the impairment to the fire alarm system or fire protection system.
- Notify insurance carrier, the alarm company, the fire protection company, and building owner/manager.
- Notify business supervisors in the areas affected and assign any additional mitigation actions given by the fire code official.
- Post tags related to the impairment at each applicable fire department connection, system control valve, fire alarm control unit, fire alarm annunciator, and fire command center. The impairment tag shall indicate which system, or part thereof, has been affected. The fire code official shall specify where the tag(s) are to be placed.
- Coordinate necessary tools and materials have been assembled on the impairment site.
- Implement appropriate emergency action(s) as directed by the fire code official to minimize potential injury or damage.

Cancellation of Fire Watch

It is the owners' responsibility to cancel the fire watch once the fire protection system has been fully restored or after the end of the special circumstances, preplanned or emergency impairment, or event.

Once the fire watch has been cancelled, the owner or representative must notify the monitoring company, the Local Fire Department and Brunswick County Fire Marshal's Office.

Restoring Systems to Service

When impaired equipment is restored to normal working order, the impairment coordinator shall verify that all the following procedures have been implemented.

- Necessary inspections and tests have been conducted to verify that affected systems are operational.
- Supervisors within the building have been advised that protection is restored.
- The Brunswick County Fire Marshals Office has been advised that the fire protection system is restored with documentation being provided.
- The building owner/manager, insurance carrier, fire alarm company, fire protection company, and other involved parties have been advised that protection has been restored.
- The impairment tag(s) have been removed.

Brunswick County Fire Marshal's Office

IMPAIREMENT NOTIFICATION

Facility/Business Name : _____

Address/Building : _____

Contact Number : _____

Type of Impairment:

- Preplanned Impairment of a Fire Protection System
- Partial Emergency Impairment to a Fire Protection System
- Complete Emergency Impairment of a Fire Protection System
- Preplanned Impairment of a Fire Alarm System
- Partial Emergency Impairment to a Fire Alarm System
- Complete Emergency Impairment of a Fire Alarm System

Type of System Impaired:

- Fire Pump
- Fire Sprinkler System
- Clean Agent Suppression System
- Kitchen Fire Suppression System
- Fire Detection / Fire Alarm System
- Fire Alarm System – Occupant Notification Device(s)
- Foam System
- Other

Area(s) Protected by System: _____

Reason for Impairment: _____

System Out of Service

Date Removed from Service: _____ Time: _____ Planned Duration: _____

Taken Out of Service By: _____ Authorized By: _____

Main Contact: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Impairment Notification:

- Save a copy of this completed form and place on site at a constantly attended location.
- If a fire alarm system or fire protection system is impaired, please email a copy of this form to fire.marshall@brunswickcountync.gov

Signature _____ DATE/TIME _____

FIRE
PROTECTION
SYSTEM
IS OUT OF
SERVICE

FIRE
ALARM
SYSTEM
IS OUT OF
SERVICE
