

FIRE WATCH PROCEDURE

PURPOSE: The purpose of this plan is to establish a procedure to provide fire detection and occupant notification within any building owned or maintained by SUNY Cobleskill in the event that the *Fire Alarm System* is not in full operation. The *Fire Alarm System* includes the fire alarm panel, smoke or heat detection system, sprinkler system, automatic chemical suppression system and University Police notification system.

ACCESS: This plan shall be available in writing to Campus President, all Vice Presidents, Directors, Deans, Department Chairs and all staff involved in implementing the Fire Watch Procedure.

OCCURRENCES: Fire Alarm System failures and outages can occur during construction, renovation, weather emergencies or other unplanned events. In accordance with §F901.7 of the Fire Code of New York State any situation which eliminates part or all of the fire alarm system shall necessitate that Fire Watch Procedures be initiated.

STAFF: The decision to implement the Fire Watch Procedure shall be made jointly by the Environmental Health & Safety Office, Director/Asst. Director of Facilities Management, and Chief of University Police. Individuals involved in implementing the Fire Watch Procedure include Environmental Health & Safety, University Police, Facilities Maintenance, Athletics, Residential Life, Wellness Center and CAS in accordance with employee job duties.

PROCESS:

1. Any individual who observes or has knowledge of a failure of any component of the Fire Alarm System shall immediately contact University Police or the Environmental Health & Safety Office. University Police shall immediately contact the Environmental Health & Safety Office and vice versa. Scheduled work which will affect the functioning of the Fire Alarm System must be pre-approved by the Environmental Health & Safety Office.
2. The Environmental Health & Safety Office shall seek technical assistance and guidance from Fire, Security & Sound (518-512-3074) as necessary to correct the problem or to establish a plan of correction.
3. The Director/Asst. Director of Facilities Management and University Police shall be advised of the anticipated timeline for correction. The decision to institute Fire Watch Procedures and the frequency of Fire Watch Tours will be made jointly by the Environmental Health & Safety Office, Director/Asst. Director of Facilities Management and Chief of University Police based on the anticipated timeline of correction. In general, if the problem cannot be corrected in less than 1 hour

then Fire Watch Procedure shall be initiated. In general Fire Watch tours shall occur at :

- 15 minute intervals for high hazard and high occupancy buildings
 - 30 minute intervals for low hazard or low occupancy buildings
 - Note: Intervals for accessory and unoccupied buildings shall be determined on a case by case basis
 - Note: The interval for any particular building may change as the occupancy of the building changes
4. The Director/Asst. Director of Facilities Management shall assure that appropriate Administrative Staff, Departmental Supervisors and Faculty have been notified of the need to institute Fire Watch Procedures. The Director/Asst. Director of Facilities will determine if campus-wide notification is necessary.
 5. The Director/Asst. Director of Facilities Management, the Environmental Health & Safety Office, Chief of University Police and other appropriate senior staff (Administration, Residential Life, CAS, Athletics) shall identify staff to implement the Fire Watch Procedure.
 6. The Environmental Health & Safety Office shall provide a written plan/log sheet designating the frequency of the Fire Watch tour and the building(s), floors, wings, and areas of concern to be included in the tour. The log sheet shall also include areas to document the date, time, initials of the individual performing the tour and conditions observed.

Elements of the Fire Watch tour

- Watch for activity that increases the risk of fire and take action to minimize or eliminate the activity. During Fire Watch Procedures in a residence hall cooking shall be prohibited in the building.
 - Assure that all smoke and fire doors are closed
 - Watch for signs of fire (flames, smoke, burning odors, increased temperature
 - Watch for other emergency situations (water, steam, gas leaks, power loss)
 - Use a cell phone or emergency phone to notify University Police (255-5555) of any emergency situation encountered
 - Use the bullhorn to notify occupants if a fire or other emergency situation requires that the building be evacuated. The signal for evacuation is three blasts on a portable horn
7. Environmental Health & Safety Office and University Police shall post notices throughout the affected building(s) indicating that the fire alarm system is not in operation, fire watch procedures have been initiated and the telephone number to call to report an emergency.

8. Environmental Health & Safety Office shall notify the local fire department of conditions that impact fire department response (e.g. hydrant out of service or sprinkler system not operating)
9. Fire Watch Procedures shall remain in effect until the Fire Alarm System has been repaired or returned to service and has been found to be fully operable. Fire Watch Procedures may only be discontinued under the direction of the Director/Asst. Director of Facilities Management or the Environmental Health & Safety Office.

Attachments:

SUNY Cobleskill Fire Watch Log
§F901.7 of the Fire Code of New York State

Fire Code Of New York State

§F901.7 Systems out of service. Where a required fire protection system is out of service, the fire department and the code enforcement official shall be notified immediately, and 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 the fire department and their only duty shall be to perform constant patrols of the protected premises and keep watch for fires.

Exception: The code enforcement official is permitted to waive the requirement for evacuation or a fire watch where there is not a substantial risk to life safety or where alternatives to maintain an equivalent level of safety are prescribed.

§F901.7.1 Impairment coordinator. The building owner shall assign an impairment coordinator to comply with the requirements of this section. In the absence of a specific designee, the owner shall be considered the impairment coordinator.

§F901.7.2 Tag required. A tag shall be used to indicate that a system, or portion thereof, has been removed from service.

§F901.7.3 Placement of tag. The tag shall be posted at each fire department connection, system control valve, fire alarm control unit, fire alarm annunciator and fire command center, indicating which system, or part thereof, has been removed from service. The code enforcement official shall specify where the tag is to be placed.

§F901.7.4 Preplanned impairment programs. Preplanned impairments shall be authorized by the impairment coordinator. Before authorization is given, a designated individual shall be responsible for verifying that all of the following procedures have been implemented:

1. The extent and expected duration of the impairment have been determined.
2. The areas or buildings involved have been inspected and the increased risks determined.
3. Recommendations have been submitted to management or building owner/manager.
4. The fire department has been notified.
5. The insurance carrier, the alarm company, building owner/manager, and other authorities having jurisdiction have been notified.
6. The supervisors in the areas to be affected have been notified.
7. A tag impairment system has been implemented.
8. Necessary tools and materials have been assembled on the impairment site.

§F901.7.5 Emergency impairments. When unplanned impairments occur, appropriate emergency action shall be taken to minimize potential injury and damage. The impairment coordinator shall implement the steps outlined in §F901.7.4.

§F901.7.6 Restoring systems to service. When impaired equipment is restored to normal working order, the impairment coordinator shall verify that all of the following procedures have been implemented:

1. Necessary inspections and tests have been conducted to verify that affected systems are operational.
2. Supervisors have been advised that protection is restored.
3. The fire department has been advised that protection is restored.
4. The building owner/manager, insurance carrier, alarm company, and other involved parties have been advised that protection is restored.
5. The impairment tag has been removed.