**Sprinkler System Outage & Fire Watch**



# Date Implemented:

**Review/Update Dates:**

# Policy

Fire watch procedures shall be promptly implemented if any of the sprinkler system is out of service for a cumulative 10 or more hours in a 24 hour period. This policy includes both preplanned and emergency outages.

# Purpose

Establish procedures when the sprinkler system is not functioning and provide protection for residents, staff, and visitors.

The procedures identified below include both pre-planned outages as well as emergency impairments such as system leakage, interruption of water supply, ruptured piping, and equipment failure.

**Procedures**

The impairment coordinator is **[enter name or title]**.

Preplanned impairments shall be authorized by the impairment coordinator. Prior to authorization, or when emergency impairments outlined above occur, the impairment coordinator is responsible for verifying the following requirements have been implemented:

* The extent of the impairment and expected duration have been determined.
* Areas or buildins involved have been inspected and increased risks determined.
* Recommendations have been submitted to the Administrator, Corporate Office, Management, or the Property Owner as applicable.
* The impairment coordinator shall arrange for:
  + Evacuation of the building or portion of the building affected by the outage, or
  + An approved fire watch implemented according to the procedures identified later in this policy, or
  + Establishment of a temporary water supply, or
  + Established and implementation of an approved program to eliminate potentional ignition sources and limit the amount of fuel available to the fire.
* The impaired components/area of the sprinkler system will be tagged to indicate that the system or part thereof, has been removed from service. Tags shall also be posted at each fire department connection and the system control valve, indicating which system or part thereof, has been removed from service.
* All necessary tools and materials have been assembled on the impairment site.

When any components of the sprinkler system is not functioning for 10 or more cumulative hours in a 24 hour period the **[Enter Title]** will notify the following individuals:

* The insurance company **[enter insurance company name]** at **[enter contact number].**
* The local fire department at **[enter contact number].**
* The Department of Inspections, Appeals, & Licensing (DIAL) at **[1-877-686-0027].** This notification will serve as the health facilities and fire prevention notification. \*Note according to Iowa Administrative rules [481-50.7(7)](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/iac/rule/05-31-2023.481.50.7.pdf) the health facilities unit at DIAL must be notified when the sprinkler system outage has occurred for a cumulative four or more hours in a 24-hour period.
* Supervisors of the impaired area(s), corporate office and/or management company at **[enter contact number – Note if not applicable remove this bullet point]**

If the sprinkler system outage is preplanned, the above individuals will be notified at least 24 hours in advance when foreseeable and notified of the planned duration of the outage. If the sprinkler system outage is not preplanned, the above individuals will be notified when the system has been out of service for four or more cumulative hours in a 24-hour period and fire watch procedures have been implemented.

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

* Any necessary inspections and tests conducted to verify that the affected systems are operational.
* The impairment tag has been removed.
* All individuals as identified above will be notified of system restoration and termination of fire watch procedures.

Fire Watch Procedures

All staff assigned fire watch duties will be trained on fire prevention techniques prior to being assigned fire watch duties.

Staff members assigned to fire watch duties will be dedicated to conducting fire watch rounds (meaning they will not have any other duties assigned).

Fire watch rounds will be conducted continuously, with each area of the building included in the impairment monitored at least every 30 minutes. If each area of the building included in the impairment cannot be inspected at least every 30 minutes, additional dedicated staff members will be assigned.

Each dedicated staff member assigned to fire watch duties will have means of constant communication with the fire department if needed.

Fire watch rounds will be documented on an appropriate flowsheet and maintained according to record retention policies and procedures.

Fire Prevention Measures

Prior to preplanned outages and immediately upon emergency outages the following steps will be taken:

* Outside doors will be closed and secured, windows, fire doors, and fire shutters will be closed. Residents with wandering alarms or exit seeking behaviors will be kept within close supervision such as being taken to an activity area or dining room.
* All necessary tools and materials will be assembled at the impairment site.
* All waste, rags, paint residue, rubbish, and similar combustible items are removed from the building.
* All remaining operable fire protection equipment will be in place and not obstructed.
* All aisles will remain clear.
* All motors and machines not required to operate will be turned off.
* Unsecured offices and conference rooms will be checked for unapproved smoking materials that may have been carelessly discarded.
* All unnecessary heat-producing devices will be turned off in the impairment area.
* Flammable and combustible materials will be properly stored in approved containers. Flammable compressed gas cylinders will be stored in a 1-hour fire resistance rated room unless currently in use.
* Sprinkler valves shall be in the open position. If sprinkler control valves are electronically supervised by the Fire Alarm System and are not included in the impairment, then visual examination is not required.
* Proper ventilation will be maintained in the impaired area.
* Plumbing fixtures and piping will be checked for leaks and repaired promptly.

**Resources**

CMS. (July, 2018). *Fire Safety Survey Report – 2012 Fire Safety Code Healthcare* <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/CMS-Forms/CMS-Forms/Downloads/CMS2786R.pdf>

Iowa DIAL (2023, Jul. 5). Health Care Facilities Administration 481-50.7 Additional Notification. <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/iac/rule/05-31-2023.481.50.7.pdf>

Iowa DPS. (Retrieved 2024, Apr. 9). *Sprinkler System Outage/Fire Watch Policy Requirements.* <https://lai.memberclicks.net/assets/sprinkler%20Outage%20Policy%20Requirements.pdf>