

# Fire Watch Procedure Template

## Fire Alarm Outages

### (Health Care Facilities)

**THE PLAN:** A plan of action is required should the fire alarm system fail to work properly for more than 4 hours in a 24 hour period and not provide continuous facility-wide protection. A fire alarm system could include but is not limited to: the fire alarm panel, smoke or heat detection system, and the fire alarm notification system.

**AVAILABILITY:** The plan needs to be available, in writing, at all staff stations. Comprehensive training needs to be given to all staff that performs a fire watch.

**STAFF:** A designated facility staff person, trained in Rescue, Alarm, Contain and Extinguish/Evacuate (RACE) on the implementation of a facility wide fire watch needs to be determined.

**DOCUMENTATION:** Every fire watch tour needs to be documented with the findings which will include the date, time and staff initials of person(s) performing the watch. A fire watch tour is a continuous activity performed by having one or more assigned/trained staff walking the entire affected area of the system outage. The tour monitors the facility through direct observation for possible signs of fire.

**OCCURENCES:** Fire alarm system outages can occur during construction, renovations, electrical storms or other planned or unplanned events which eliminate part or all of the fire alarm system's functioning ability.

#### WHAT TO DO:

1. Observation of fire or smoke during this fire watch should immediately initiate the facility's fire safety plan.
2. Contact the facility Administrator, Director of Nursing, and Maintenance Manager when any problems are encountered with the fire alarm system.
3. Contact the fire alarm company should the Maintenance Manger not be able to correct the problem. The fire alarm company shall be on site or on contract until the system is repaired, replaced and/or working.
4. Notify the Fire Department Chief that the fire alarm system is not working correctly.
5. If the fire alarm system is inoperable for a time period of 4 hours or more in a 24 hour period, notify the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Quality Assurance through your assigned DQA engineer or supervisor.
6. The fire watch procedure shall designate the wing, floor or building identifier during the facility tour.
7. Fire watch tours shall occur continuously. Typically at 30 minute intervals 24 hours a day.
8. Fire watches shall be performed by personnel solely dedicated to the fire watch and no other facility-related activities or events.
9. A fire watch should check and document the following in **all** rooms including:

- Patient/Resident rooms (remove smoking materials and extension cords)
  - Dietary and Laundry rooms (remove lint from dryers and soiled linen)
  - Mechanical and Electrical rooms (remove combustible/flammable materials)
  - Fire department access to the facility (remove snow and ice from exits)
  - Fire department access to hydrants, sprinkler connections, standpipes and fire extinguishers
  - Exit accesses, exits and exit discharge are unobstructed
  - Storage of combustible or flammable materials shall be in approved containers or designated storage areas
  - Identify temporary heating devices and have them removed
  - Ensure fire and smoke doors close properly
  - Unnecessary machinery which is running continuously is turned off
  - Sprinkler valves shall be open and sealed; gauges should indicate normal pressures and sprinkler heads shall be unobstructed.
  - Construction or renovation work areas shall be monitored continuously
- 10.** Maintenance staff shall be available on site or on call for equipment emergency shutdown situations.
- 11.** Additional fire extinguishers shall be distributed facility-wide and staff shall be informed of the fire extinguishers locations.