



*Fire Marshal's Office*  
*San Mateo County Fire*  
**CAL FIRE**

320 Paul Scannell Drive, San Mateo, California 94402 (650) 573-3846

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Title: *Fire Watch Guidelines*

Approved: *Mark Mondragon*

**SCOPE:**

A Fire Watch is a physical inspection conducted when a building's fire alarm and/or sprinkler system is not operational. During a Fire Watch, a responsible occupant actively looks for evidence of smoke and fire, listens for in-room smoke detectors sounding, and if smoke or fire is found, contacts emergency personnel and evacuates the building.

The California Fire Code requires that fire alarm and fire sprinkler systems are operational at all times. If the alarm or sprinkler system is not operational, the facility may not be occupied.

A Fire Watch is an emergency, short-term alternative that permits continued occupancy of facilities until deficiencies are corrected.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR INSTRUCTION:**

The owner, manager, or person in charge or control of the building/premises shall assign to the fire watch as many personnel as are required and shall instruct fire watch personnel in the following:

1. The procedure for notifying the Fire Department.
2. The area(s) to be patrolled.
3. A method of alerting building occupants and an evacuation procedure.
4. Training necessary to insure Fire Watch personnel are capable of reactivating disabled fire alarm/sprinkler systems when required/necessary.
5. Any special instructions required by the Fire Marshal/Fire Department.

**FIRE WATCH PROCEDURES:**

1. An inspection of the entire building must be conducted by a responsible occupant at least once every half hour or as directed by the Fire Marshal.
2. The person responsible for the fire watch must be continuously awake, in a public area of the building at all times during their shift, and shall have no other duties besides the fire watch.
3. A written log of the fire watch must be maintained. The log must include the date, time, status of alarm, and legible signature of the person performing the watch. The log may be picked up by a Fire Marshal when the alarm is restored.
4. The fire watch must be continuous as long as the building is occupied, night and day, until the alarm is repaired.
5. Continue the fire watch until it is cancelled by the San Mateo County Fire Marshal.

## **LOG BOOK:**

1. The owner, manager, or person in charge or control of the premises shall provide a log book which contains a directory of names, telephone numbers and other information to assist in making emergency calls. The log book shall be the official document used to record a history of patrol rounds including name(s), dates and times an example log sheet is included at the back of this document.
2. The log book shall be maintained on the premises and be available for inspection by the Fire Marshal/Fire Department.

