



## STANDARD 519 FIRE WATCH

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*Please note that the District assumes no liability for any damages incurred directly or indirectly as a result of any errors, omissions, or discrepancies between this standard and any applicable law. It is the sole responsibility of the person or persons conducting any work pursuant to this standard to ensure their work complies with any and all applicable codes, ordinances, and regulations.*

**Supersedes:** VCFPD Standard 14.4.5

### CHAPTER 1 – ADMINISTRATION

**1.1 Purpose.** This standard is prepared for the use and guidance of providing a fire watch when required by the Fire District.

**1.2 Scope.** This standard shall set forth the requirement of a fire watch when a building or premise presents a hazard to life or property; or when it is determined that any fire protection equipment or life safety system is inoperable, defective, inadequate; or has been taken out of service and such hazard will exist for a period of greater than 4 hours; or when deemed necessary by the Fire District.

**1.3 Responsibility.** The owner, manager, or responsible person in charge of the building or premises shall notify the Fire District where a required fire protection or life safety system is impaired. When required by the Fire District, the building shall either be evacuated or an approved fire watch shall be provided. The responsible person shall maintain the fire watch until the Fire District provides written authorization to stop or discontinue.

**1.4 Permit.** A construction permit is required for the repair or modification to any fire protection equipment or life safety system.

### CHAPTER 2 – DEFINITIONS

**2.1 Fire Watch.** A temporary measure intended to ensure continuous and systematic surveillance of a building or portion thereof by one or more qualified adult individuals for the purpose of identifying and controlling fire hazards, detecting early signs of unwanted fire, raising an alarm of fire and notifying the fire department.

**2.2 Impairment Coordinator.** The person responsible for the maintenance of a particular fire protection system.

**2.3 Ventura County Fire Code (VCFC).** The current edition of the Ventura County Fire Protection District ordinance adopted as part of the State of California's triennial code cycle and consisting in part of the current adopted edition of the California Fire Code; portions of the current adopted edition of the International Fire Code; and the Fire District's amendments thereto.

## CHAPTER 3 – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

**3.1 General.** A Fire Watch Application Form (Form 634) shall be submitted to the Fire Prevention Bureau as indicated elsewhere in this document.

**3.2 Building Permits.** Obtain any applicable permits from the appropriate **Building and Safety Department** to repair or modify fire protection equipment or life safety systems.

**3.3 Plans and Specifications Submittal.** Plans and specifications shall be submitted to the Fire Prevention Bureau for review and approval for any installation of or modification to existing fire protection equipment of life safety system.

**Exception:** Plans and specifications shall not be required to be submitted for review and approval when there is an unplanned impairment to fire protection equipment or a life safety system. Permits, inspections and fees shall be required regardless of impairment being planned or unplanned.

**3.4 Fees.** Appropriate fees can be found at [www.vcfd.org](http://www.vcfd.org) or by calling the Fire Prevention Counter at (805) 389-9738. Fees can be paid by check/money order or credit card.

**3.5 Record Number.** The Fire District has instituted the use of a "Record Number" for tracking all projects submitted for review. To provide faster customer service, please refer to your Record Number when contacting the Fire Prevention Bureau. Your Record Number will also be listed on the Fire District approved plans.

## CHAPTER 4 – INSPECTIONS

**4.1 General.** Inspection and inspection fees shall be required for all planned and unplanned impairments. Fees shall be paid prior to authorization to stop or discontinue fire watch.

**4.2 Responsibility.** It is the responsibility of the repairing contractor or impairment coordinate to be on the job site during the inspection. Failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the inspection.

**4.3 Inspection Requests.** Inspection requests can only be taken from the repairing contractor or impairment coordinator. Inspections shall be requested Monday through Friday prior to 3:00 p.m. The Fire Prevention Bureau will make every effort to accommodate last minute inspection requests for emergency repairs.

**4.4 Inspection Schedule.** It is the intent of the Fire Prevention Bureau to perform inspections one business day after the inspection has been requested. However due to training requirements, meetings, emergency services and other scheduled and non-scheduled events, it cannot be guaranteed that all inspection will be conducted the next business day.

**4.5 Schedule by Phone.** Call (805) 389-9744 one business day prior to inspection for scheduling an inspection. The inspection request line is open Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

**4.6 Schedule by Fax.** Inspections can be scheduled via fax at (805) 388-4356. Fire Prevention Form 611 must be used to request inspections. Faxed inspection requests must be received prior to 3:00 p.m.

**4.7 Schedule by Email.** Inspections can be scheduled via email at [fire.inspections@ventura.org](mailto:fire.inspections@ventura.org). Fire Prevention Form 611 must be used to request inspections. Emailed inspection requests must be received prior to 3:00 p.m.

**4.8 Contact Information.** When scheduling an inspection, be sure to include your contact number where the inspector can call you back after 7:30 a.m. the day of the inspection to notify you of your scheduled inspection time.

**4.9 Inspection Times.** Inspection times are approximate and may vary because of delays at previous inspection or emergency response by Fire District personnel. Please allow time on either side of the scheduled inspection time for the inspector to arrive.

## CHAPTER 5 – PROCEDURE

**5.1 General.** The following shall set forth the requirements for application and implementation of a fire watch for augmenting fire protection or to temporary substitute for required fire protection that is inoperable or not consistent with the level required for any reason, until such system has been approved for service.

**5.2 Responsibility.** The owner, manager, or responsible person in charge of the building or premises shall assign an impairment coordinator and as many personnel as are necessary to the fire watch. In the absence of a specific designee, the owner shall be considered the impairment coordinator.

**5.2.1 Impairment Coordinator.** The impairment coordinator shall be responsible to provide:

- (1) A means of reliable communication to the fire department as approved by the Fire District.
- (2) Additional fire extinguishers when required by the Fire District.
- (3) Instruction in the procedure for reporting emergencies to the fire department.
- (4) Detailed instruction of method, location and frequency of patrols.
- (5) A method of alerting building occupants and an evacuation procedure when two or more fire watch personnel are required.
- (6) Two-way radios to facilitate communication and evacuation.
- (7) A procedure for reactivating sprinkler valves in the event of a fire when the sprinkler system has been taken out of service.

- (8) A logbook, which contains a directory of names, telephone numbers, and other information to assist in making emergency calls and calls to key management personnel.
- (9) The logbook shall be maintained on the premises and shall be available for inspection by the Fire District.
- (10) The logbook shall be used to record a history of patrol rounds. (See Fire Watch Log)
- (11) The frequency of rounds, as approved by the Fire District.
- (12) Any other instructions required by the Fire District.

**5.2.2 Fire Watch.** Assigned fire watch personnel shall:

- (1) Be able to communicate effectively.
- (2) Be thoroughly familiar with the area they are patrolling.
- (3) Know the locations of fire extinguishers within the building.
- (4) Perform patrol operations according to employer's instructions.
- (5) Limit hazardous work and restrict hot work to only work that is necessary to repair system(s).
- (6) Patrol their designated area at a minimum of once each half-hour.
- (7) Make reports as instructed.
- (8) Maintain written record of patrol rounds and any significant information shall be recorded in a logbook.
- (9) Remain on duty until properly relieved.
- (10) Relay any special orders or pertinent information to relief personnel.
- (11) Patrol the entire building (all rooms, including offices, basement penthouses, etc.).
- (12) Have some visible means of identification, such as an armband or nametag as approved by the Fire District.
- (13) Alert building occupants of an emergency and direct evacuation when required by the Fire District.

**5.3 Tag.** A tag shall be used to indicate that a system, or portion thereof, has been removed from service.

**5.3.1 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.

**5.4 Preplanned Impairment Programs.** Preplanned impairments shall be authorized by the Fire District and 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) A completed Fire Watch Application (Form 634) has been submitted to the Fire District for review and approval.
- (2) All necessary permits have been acquired.
- (3) The extent and expected duration of the impairment have been determined.
- (4) The areas or buildings involved have been inspected and the increased risks determined.
- (5) Recommendation have been submitted to management or building owner that will reduce the risk of fire.
- (6) The insurance carrier, alarm company, building owner, and other authorities having jurisdiction have been notified.
- (7) Occupants in the areas to be affected have been notified.
- (8) A impairment tag system has been implemented.
- (9) Necessary tools and materials have been assembled on the impairment site.

**5.5 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 Section 5.4.

**5.6 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 test have been conducted to verify that affected systems are operational.
- (2) Occupants in the areas that were affected have been notified that protection is restored.
- (3) The Fire District has provided written authorization to stop or discontinue fire watch.
- (4) The building owner, insurance carrier, alarm company and other involved parties have been advised that protection is restored.
- (5) The impairment tags have been removed.

**FIRE WATCH LOG**

(Please Print)

Business name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Fire watch name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

I have read the instructions about conducting this Fire Watch and understand that I am responsible to follow those instructions and patrol my designated area at least once each half hour.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm Area patrolled: \_\_\_\_\_

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