

Cedar Hammock Fire Rescue Standard Operational Guidelines

FIRE WATCH

General

This information is provided to clarify the requirements for a “fire watch.” A “fire watch” is the action of a person or persons assigned to an area for the sole purpose of protecting the occupants and the structure from fire or similar emergencies. This Standard Operational Guidelines derives its authority from the “Florida Fire Prevention Code,” 2004 Edition; NFPA 101, Life Safety Code, 2003 edition; Chapter 4, section 4.6.1.2, 4.6.1.3, 4.6.11.1 and Chapter 9, section 9.6.1.7 and section A.9.6.1.7, and section 9.7.6.1.

Individuals performing a “fire watch” duty should be specially trained in fire prevention and protection, and in occupant and fire department notification techniques. (Also see NFPA 601, Standard for Security Services in Fire Loss Prevention.) **Note:** A professional security company is not required.

Requirements for a Fire Watch

If a fire protection system fails, or there are an excessive number of accidental activations or nuisance alarms, a building owner (or their representative) may be required by Cedar Hammock Fire Rescue to provide a “fire watch” until the system is repaired. Personnel to conduct the “fire watch” are determined by the building owner and must be approved by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).

A “fire watch” is also required whenever fire protection systems are in a trouble or a supervisory mode for more than four (4) hours. A nuisance alarm shall be defined as “any alarm caused by mechanical failure, malfunction, improper installation, or lack of proper maintenance, or any alarm activated by a cause that cannot be determined.”

Owner Responsibilities

The owner, his/her representative or an individual responsible for a structure or an area who has been notified by the Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue that a “fire watch” is required for said structure or area, shall be responsible for:

1. Establishing and maintaining a “fire watch” with properly trained personnel (as approved by the authority having jurisdiction) until such time the “fire watch” is terminated by the Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue.
2. Notifying the monitoring company(s).
3. Notifying the Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue that the fire protection system does not work properly or a condition exists (as stated above) that may require a “fire watch.” Notification may be made at (941) 751-7090.
4. Notifying the Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue that the fire protection system has been repaired or the condition has abated. Contact number is (941) 751-7090.
5. Contacting the repair company to fix the fire protection system(s).
6. Notifying and keeping advised the issuing authority of progress, if a Notice of Violation has been issued. Notification may be made at (941) 751-7090.

Duties of the Fire Watch

Individuals serving as a “fire watch” shall have the following duties:

1. Conduct periodic patrols of the facility of area (see Frequency of Inspections).
2. Identify any fire, life, health or property hazards.
3. Notify the Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue of the exact address and type of emergency.
4. In an emergency situation, notify occupants of the facility of the need to evacuate. Utilize the facilities alarm system(s) (if in working condition).
5. “Fire watch” personnel must have readily available to them, a direct means of contacting the Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue. (A telephone is acceptable.)
6. Maintain a log of “fire watch” activities. (See “Fire Watch Log.”)
7. Have a working knowledge of the location and use of fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers (types and uses).

8. “Fire watch” personnel shall not have other duties other than those specified by the Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue. **Note:** “Fire watch” personnel shall not perform fire fighting duties beyond the scope of the ordinary citizen.

Frequency of Inspections

“Fire watch” personnel should patrol the facility or area every 15 minutes in the following situations:

1. The facility or area has people sleeping.
2. The facility or area is an institutional occupancy.
3. The facility or area is an occupied assembly occupancy.

Facilities or areas that do not meet the requirements for a 15 minute patrol frequency shall have a “fire watch” patrol every 30 minutes.

Record Keeping

A “Fire Watch Log” shall be maintained at the facility or area. The “log” must be available to the AHJ at all times during the “fire watch.” The “log” shall show, as a minimum, the following:

- a. Name and address of the facility.
- b. Name of the lead “fire watch” personnel.
- c. Date - new log page at the beginning of each day.
- d. Times that the patrol was started and completed for each patrol.
- e. Name of person making entry into “log.”
- f. Remarks section - for general information (ex. Started watch; on patrol; maintenance personnel arrived; informed owner of fire hazard found; etc.)

Cancellation of Fire Watch

It is the owners’ responsibility to cancel the “fire watch” once the fire protection system has been fully restored or the hazardous situation has been abated. If the owner has received a Notice of Violation, termination of a “fire watch” must be approved by the AHJ prior to termination of the “fire watch.” Once the “fire watch” has been cancelled, the owner or his/her representative must notify the monitoring company(s) and the Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue at (941) 751-7090.

Use of Cedar Hammock Firefighters as Fire Watch

Cedar Hammock firefighters are well trained in fire suppression and education. They are also pre-approved as individuals capable of properly performing the duties of a “fire watch.” Because of this, owners, their representative or an individual responsible for a structure or an area may wish to utilize the services of a Cedar Hammock firefighter(s) as a “fire watch.” It is the policy of the Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue to allow personnel to perform this function while off-duty.

Cedar Hammock firefighters are permitted to utilize the Class “A” work uniform while performing “fire watch” duties and certain equipment that may be approved by the Fire Chief. Personnel, while actually performing the duties of a “fire watch” are excused from emergency call-back or other mandatory overtime orders. Firefighters wishing to accept “fire watch” duty shall submit a “Fire Watch Request Form” to the Fire Chief or Division Chief/Fire Marshal. The request shall include:

1. A “fire watch” work schedule indicating the exact times and dates the “fire watch” will be conducted;
2. The name of the individual requesting a “fire watch”;
3. Address where the “fire watch” will be conducted;
4. 24 hour phone number(s) of individual requesting a “fire watch”; and,
5. List of city equipment (excluding work uniform) the employee wishes to utilize while performing the duties of a “fire watch” (ex. flash light, radio, etc.) The Fire Chief shall approve or disapprove this request.

In order to standardize, simplify and reduce confusion over the payment to Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue personnel, the payment for an employee’s services shall be conducted as set forth:

- a. The pay rate for a Cedar Hammock firefighter as a “fire watch” shall be set at \$25/hour;
- b. Payment shall be made by the hiring individual directly to the Cedar Hammock firefighter;
- c. Payment shall be made immediately after the completion of a work cycle or immediately after the termination of the need of a “fire watch,” or as may be mutually agreed to by the two parties.

Cedar Hammock Fire & Rescue

Fire Watch Request Form

Firefighter's Name: _____ Date: _____

Individual Requesting a "Fire Watch": _____

Individual Requesting a "Fire Watch" Phone Numbers:

_____ Home phone _____ Work Phone _____ Cell Phone

Address where "Fire Watch" is to be conducted: _____

"Fire Watch" Work Schedule (include times and dates): _____

List of Fire Department Property Requested: _____

(Personnel requesting the utilization of department equipment/property are responsible for the proper care and maintenance of said equipment and/or property. Personnel requesting the utilization of department equipment/property may be required to pay for or replace (as approved by the Fire Chief) any department equipment/property that has been damaged or lost by the requestee. The requestee is further responsible to see that the above listed equipment/property is properly placed back in-service.

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE (DATE)

DEPARTMENT HEAD (DATE)
(Signature)