



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

**FPB POLICY
D-15-4**

**DISRUPTED SERVICE TO AUTOMATIC
FIRE PROTECTION, DETECTION, AND
ALARM SYSTEMS CFC 901.6 and 901.7**

I. PURPOSE

This policy explains the requirements to provide notification of a fire when an automatic fire protection and/or detection system is not in service. It also includes procedures to implement in the event of an excessive number of accidental fire protection and/or detection system activations.

II. SCOPE

This policy shall include requirements in all buildings whether new or existing, where an automatic fire protection and/or detection system is installed, including buildings undergoing alteration, repair, or demolition, but is not in service.

III. DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

- A. Impairment Coordinator: The building owner or representative that is responsible for verifying that all of the following procedures have been implemented:
- a. For preplanned and emergency impairments:
 1. The extent and expected duration of the impairment have been determined.
 2. The area or buildings involved have been inspected and the increased risks determined.
 3. Recommendations have been submitted to management or building owner/manager.
 4. The fire department has been notified.
 5. The insurance carrier, the alarm company, building owner/manager, and other authorities have jurisdiction have been notified.
 6. The supervisors in the area to be affected have been notified.
 - b. Restoring systems to service:
 1. Necessary inspections and test have been conducted to verify that affected systems are operational.

Community Risk Reduction

Fire-Rescue Department • 600 B Street, Suite 1300 • San Diego, CA 92101-4903
Tel (619) 533-4400 Fax 544-6806

2. Supervisors have been advised that protection is restored.
3. The fire department has been advised that protection is restored.
4. The building owner/manager, insurance carrier, alarm company and other involved parties have been advised that protection is restored.

- B. Fire Watch: A person trained as a site guard who is capable of notifying the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department (SDFD) and occupants of a fire. Fire watch may be Department personnel.
- C. Excessive: More than three (3) accidental activations in twelve (12) calendar months at the same premises, responded to by the fire department.
- D. Controllable: The activation of any alarm which results in the response of the fire department caused by the negligence or intentional misuse of the system by the owner or his employees, servants or agents; or caused by mechanical failure, malfunction, improper installation, improper design, insufficient or inappropriate maintenance, improper placement or component oversensitivity, or any other response for which the fire department personnel are unable to gain access to the premises for any reason or are unable to determine the apparent cause of the alarm system; or any other activation not caused by heat, smoke or fire, exclusive of a non-controllable false alarm defined below. (Refer to SDFD Operations Manual Standard Instruction 01, Section X.
- E. Non-Controllable False Alarm: An alarm is considered a non-controllable false alarm if the alarm system is activated due to malicious causes beyond the control of the owner.
- F. Tag Impairment System: A tag shall be used to indicate that a system, or portion thereof, has been removed from service. 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.

IV. PROCEDURES TO ESTABLISH A FIRE WATCH

- A. The owner or their authorized representative, Impairment Coordinator, shall immediately notify the Fire Communications Center at (858) 974-9891 and the Fire Prevention Bureau (619) 533-4300 any time an automatic fire protection or detection system is not in operation or in the event of an excessive number of accidental activations.
1. In the event of an excessive number of accidental activations, the system shall be treated as a problematic system. A Notice of Violation shall be written to the owner or authorized representative using Code Section F901.6, Systems Operative at All Times and F901.7, Problematic Systems and Systems Out of Service.

2. In addition, a fire watch will be required to be provided in compliance with item D below.
- B. The building representative must notify occupants of the fire watch within 24 hours of its establishment.
 - C. Any repair or corrective action shall be initiated immediately. After repair or corrective action is completed and the system is back in service, the Fire Communications Center, Fire Prevention Bureau, and occupants shall be notified.
 - D. A fire watch shall be provided when the system cannot be repaired in a timely manner (more than 24 hours) and/or the lack of protection creates a building or life safety hazard as determined by the Fire Marshal or their representative.

Exception: A fire watch shall be established immediately when fire protection, detection, and alarm systems are not in operation in high, life-risk occupancies such as hospitals, care facilities, schools, high-rise buildings, and R-1 residential occupancies.

- E. The minimum level of fire watch personnel shall be at the discretion of the Fire Marshal or assigned designated personnel for multi-story buildings or large buildings with multiple fire protection system zones. Additional guards assigned as fire watch may depend on the hazard and building design. The fire watch service will continue until the automatic fire protection or detection system is placed back in service.

Fire watch personnel shall be provided with at least one reasonable means of notifying the fire department. Their only duty shall be to perform constant patrols of the protected premises and keep watch for fires.

Promulgated by: _____

Date: _____

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