



# Shoreline Fire Department

*Dedicated to the Protection of Life and Property*

Fire Prevention Division  
17525 Aurora Ave N  
Shoreline WA 98133  
Tel. 206.533.6500

*Serving the Shoreline Community for over 80 years, since 1939*

---

## Shoreline Fire Department Standards

### SHFDS 11.0

#### Fire Watch Standard

Revised 3/3/2026

### 11.0 General

#### 11.1. Scope:

This standard contains detailed criteria which shall be used as a reference in conjunction with the requirements for fire watch or standby personnel from the International Fire Code, specific permit conditions, this standard, or by the specific direction from the FCO

#### Referenced Standards and Codes

1. International Fire Code
2. NFPA 51 B 2019
3. [Systems Testing & Impairments - Shoreline Fire Department](#)

#### 11.1.1 Owners Responsibilities

1. Establish, instruct, and maintain fire watch personnel.
2. Notify your monitoring company.
3. Notify the Shoreline Fire Department Fire Marshal's Office that your system is not working and when the system has been repaired.
4. Contact the repair company to fix the fire protection system(s).
5. Maintain fire watch log.

#### 11.1.2 Fire Watch for Commercial and Multi-Family Occupancies

In the event you are directed to provide a fire watch for your building or group of buildings, you shall meet the following requirements:

##### 1. Direction

A fire watch shall be in place at the site by the time directed by the FCO or his/her designee (no later than 20 hours from the initial alarm or trouble signal.)

##### 2. Number of Personnel Required

A fire watch shall consist of one standby person per 50,000 square feet of gross floor area of commercial, warehouse, office, retail, or industrial building.

OR

One standby person per 50 units of residential occupancy

OR

The number of fire watch personnel as directed by the FCO

### **11.1.3 Qualifications**

All Standby or Fire Watch Personnel shall be a responsible adult who is a minimum of 18 years old, and capable of recognizing and responding to a fire emergency in an efficient and appropriate manner including having the ability to dial 911 with an available cell phone or landline.

### **11.1.4 Requirements**

If a fire protection system fails, is taken out of service, undergoes demolition or modification, or experiences frequent accidental activations or nuisance alarms, the Fire Department may require the building owner (or their representative) to implement a fire watch until the system is restored.

The building owner is responsible for designating qualified adult personnel to conduct the fire watch. These individuals must be capable of promptly recognizing signs of fire and responding effectively to an emergency

A fire watch is also required whenever fire protection systems are in a “trouble” or a “supervisory” mode for more than 8 hours. A nuisance alarm is 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.” (2019 NFPA 72, 3.3.314.2 & 3.3.314.4)

**Note:** A professional security company is not required to conduct a fire watch, but may be required by the Fire Department when life safety conditions warrant such action.

### **11.1.5 Relief for Standby Personnel**

Standby personnel must be rotated in shifts and/or substituted as needed and especially during extreme weather circumstances or prolonged duration to ensure constant and alert response to any emergency.

### **11.1.6 Cessation of Fire Watch**

The fire watch shall continue until all systems have been restored, deficiencies have been corrected and the system is fully operational. The FCO official shall be notified before the Fire Watch ends. To notify the Fire Marshal’s Office, please contact the Shoreline Fire Department at 206-533-6565.

### **11.1.7 Fire Watch for Problematic Systems or During System Maintenance**

Where a fire protection system(s) is out of service in part or in its entirety, the fire department and the fire code official shall be notified immediately and, where required by the FCO, the building

shall either be evacuated, or an approved fire watch shall be provided for all occupants left unprotected by the shutdown until the fire protection system has been returned to service.

If the FCO or his/her designee determines that a fire alarm system has an excessive number of accidental or nuisance activations with no fire or smoke present, the FCO is authorized to deactivate the fire alarm system and require the building owner or occupant to provide standby fire watch personnel as set forth in the International Fire Code Section (IFC) 901.7 until the system is restored to normal status.

While the system is out of service for maintenance or repair, the fire alarm technicians who have placed the system out of service shall be responsible for the duties of fire watch.

**Exception:** Facilities with an approved notification and impairment management program. The notification and impairment program for water-based fire protection systems shall comply with NFPA 25.

### **11.1.8 Fire Watch for Buildings Under Construction, Alteration, or Demolition**

The owner or owner's authorized agent shall be responsible for the development, implementation and maintenance of an approved, written site safety plan establishing a fire prevention program at the project site and shall be applicable throughout all phases of the construction, repair alteration, or demolition work. The plan addresses the requirements of IFC Section 3303 and other applicable portions of the IFC, Shoreline Fire Department Standards and the duties of staff and staff training requirements. The plan shall be submitted and approved as part of the building permit application. Any changes to the plan shall be submitted for approval. Where required by the FCO or the site safety plan established in accordance with IFC 3303.1, a fire watch shall be provided for building demolition and for building construction.

A fire watch shall be provided during nonworking hours for new construction that exceeds 40 feet in height above the lowest adjacent grade at any point along the building perimeter, for new multi-story construction with an aggregate area exceeding 50, 000 square feet per story or as required by the FCO in accordance with IFC Section 3305.5. and SHFDS 11.0.

A fire watch shall be provided during and shall continue for not less than 30 minutes after the conclusion of work.

The primary duty of fire watch personnel shall be to perform constant patrols and watch for the occurrence of fire. The combination of fire watch duties and site security duties is acceptable. Personnel shall be trained to serve as an on-site fire watch. Training shall include the use of portable fire extinguishers. Fire extinguisher and fire reporting shall be in accordance with IFC Section 3310.

### **11.1.9 Fire Watch Duties**

Personnel serving as a fire watch have the following duties:

1. Conduct periodic patrols of the entire facility as specified.
2. Identify any fire, life or property hazards.
3. Notify the Shoreline Fire Department if a fire is discovered by calling 9-1-1 with the exact address and the type of emergency.
4. Notify occupants of the facility of the need to evacuate. If the sirens or public address function of the alarm system are still functional, use them to assist with the evacuation.

5. Determine at least one means of communication with the Fire Department thru 9-1-1. A telephone is acceptable.
6. Maintain a log of the fire watch activities.
7. Have knowledge of the location and use of fire protection equipment, such as fire extinguishers.
8. Fire watch personnel cannot have other duties besides their assigned fire watch. However, the Fire Department may designate other duties.

**Note:** Fire watch personnel will not perform fire-fighting duties beyond the scope of the ordinary citizen.

### 11.2.0 Frequency of Inspections

Fire watch personnel shall patrol the entire facility every 15 minutes in the following situations:

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

Facilities that do not meet the requirements for a 15-minuted patrol frequency should have a fire watch patrol every 30 minutes. If a facility cannot be completely patrolled by a fire watch person in 15 or 30 minutes, extra personnel shall be assigned fire watch duties to assure that the complete facility is patrolled in the required time frame.

### 11.2.1 Record Keeping

A fire watch log shall be maintained at the facility. The log must be available to the Shoreline Fire Department at all times during the fire watch.

The log shall show the following:

1. Address of the facility.
2. Times that the patrol has completed each tour of the facility.
3. Name of the person conducting the fire watch.
4. Record of communication(s) to the Fire Department and monitoring company.
5. Record of other information as directed by Fire Department personnel.

#### SAMPLE FIRE LOG

1234 Main Street	
Watch Person	Notes
John Lane	Started watch
John Lane	
John Lane	Alarm maintenance arrived

## **Cancelation of Firewatch**

It is the owner's responsibility to cancel the fire watch once the fire alarm and/or fire suppression system(s) has been fully restored. Once the fire watch has been cancelled, the owner or representative must notify the monitoring company and the Shoreline Fire Marshal's Office during normal business hours at (206) 533-6565. If repairs are completed after normal business hours or on weekends, notify the Fire Marshal's Office the next business day. The fire watch log shall be forwarded to the Shoreline Fire Department and will be maintained in the Fire Marshal's Office database file for the building.

For additional information regarding fire protection systems and/or confidence testing of systems, contact the Shoreline Fire Department Fire Marshal's Office at (206)533-6565.



