



Interruption of normal operation of a fire protection system for any purpose constitutes a “temporary shutdown.” Types of interruptions include, but are not limited to, periodic inspection or testing, maintenance, and repairs. During a shutdown, alternative measures are necessary to ensure that the level of safety intended by the code is maintained.

In the event any building fire protection system is shut down or impaired for any reason whatsoever, a Fire Watch through the use of Fire Watch personnel is to be implemented **immediately**. During a Fire Watch, a responsible occupant, employee or contracted security guard actively looks for evidence of smoke and fire, listens for in-room smoke detectors sounding and, if smoke or fire is found, they are to contact 911 and alert building occupants to the fire.

The Fire Watch is only intended as a short term alternative that permits continued occupancy of the building. Medicine Hat Fire Service requires the immediate action of the building owner, business operator or management firm to arrange for permanent corrective measures to be taken on the particular system which is temporarily out of service. Alternative measures for the temporary shutdown of the building’s fire protection systems are to be outlined within the Fire Safety Plan for the building.

Definition: The term “Fire Watch” is used to describe a dedicated person or persons whose sole responsibility is to look for fires within an established area; this could be a responsible occupant, employee or contracted security guard.

- 1) At least one 1 qualified person shall be employed to complete fire watch duties of the unprotected building area 24 hours per day.
- 2) If a fire alarm and detection system or part thereof, is inoperative for more than 2 hours for any reason the Medicine Hat Fire Service must be notified by calling 403-529-8282.
- 3) Fire Watch personnel are to post signage throughout the common areas of the building indicating what fire protection system is temporarily out of order and display the emergency evacuation procedures, as outlined within the approved Fire Safety Plan.
- 4) Each person assigned to Fire Watch duties should be provided with the following equipment:
 - a) Suitable means of communication for notifying Medicine Hat Fire Service
 - b) A portable air horn, whistle or other approved means of sounding an alarm to notify building occupants
 - c) Flashlight
 - d) Clipboard and pen
 - e) Copy of Fire Watch duties
 - f) Copy of the Fire Watch Log Sheet
 - g) Keys and/or access codes to provide entry to all rooms/spaces
 - h) Floor plan of the building under Fire Watch (if available)

- 5) Fire Watch personnel must tour the entire building each hour and document this on the Fire Watch Log Sheet. The person completing the rounds will record the time each round was completed and sign or initial each entry.
- 6) Fire watch personnel must be familiar with the location of portable fire extinguishers in the building and be trained in their use.
- 7) **If fire or smoke conditions are discovered,**
 - a) **Alert building occupants.**
 - b) **Call 911 from a safe area to report fire.**
 - c) **Attempt to fight small fires only if it is safe to do so.**
 - d) **Provide assistance to occupants in evacuating.**
- 8) “Hot works” such as welding or cutting shall be prohibited in the area where the sprinkler protection is impaired, or be limited to areas where approved precautions have been put into place.
- 9) Exit doors, access to exits and corridors are to be checked periodically for proper operation and obstructions while performing Fire Watch duties.
- 10) Cancelling the fire watch is based on an assessment that the fire protection system(s) is fully operational – at which time the Medicine Hat Fire Service must then be notified by calling 403-529-8282. If your fire protection system is monitored you will also need to notify your monitoring station.