



## FIRE WATCH REQUIREMENTS GUIDE

Building Division • 15151 E. Alameda Parkway, Ste 2400 • Aurora, CO 80012  
303.739.7420 • Email: permitcounter@auroragov.org

**Until a valid Certificate of Occupancy is issued by the Building Division, all buildings are considered construction sites and any occupancy, including stocking of furniture, materials and merchandise is prohibited. However, to accommodate the building owner, exceptions to the requirements of the building code may be considered if the following criteria are followed:**

- Written permission must be obtained from the City of Aurora Building Division prior to installing any furniture, merchandise or materials within a building under construction.
- Upon receiving a request for stocking this Division will conduct inspections to determine the safety and suitability of the request.
- Stocking of furniture or materials must not hinder or impact the performance of any remaining building inspections.
- Fire sprinkler and alarm systems must be operational and must be inspected and approved by the Building Division. Bringing merchandise and furniture into a building loads the building with combustibles and the building must have systems in place to extinguish a fire and occupants and emergency personnel.
- Proper exiting for the building must be in place. This includes all required exit signs, exit doors, panic hardware, etc. Stocking operations typically involve large numbers of people and it is necessary to ensure that in the event of an emergency, safe egress from the building can be accomplished.
- No safety hazards can exist in the building. We will inspect to make sure that all electrical boxes are closed, no live wires are present, guardrails and signs are in place and no other hazards to occupants exist.
- If racks are needed, all permits and inspections must be complete prior to loading of the racks.
- Failure to meet these conditions will result in the denial of stocking.

Written approval will be granted by the supervisory staff and appropriate forms (orange in color) must be posted on the construction site with the building permit card. The approval form will indicate the areas of the building that may be stocked and must be signed by the job site contractor. Without this form stocking will not be permitted.

### What is a fire watch?

A fire watch is a temporary measure for the purposes of ensuring the fire-safety of a building or premises in the event of any act or situation which creates an increased risk to persons or property. The term fire watch is also used to describe a dedicated person or persons whose sole responsibility is to look for fires and other hazards within a building, specific area, or premises.

### What is the purpose of a fire watch?

The purpose of a fire watch is to provide temporary surveillance in a building or premises for the purposes of identifying and controlling fire hazards, detecting early signs of unwanted fire, initiating alarms or evacuation procedures, and notifying the fire department.

### How long can a fire watch remain in effect?

In general, a fire watch is to be used only as a temporary means to provide either an extra level of safety (in the case of a special event or hot work operation) or to supplant an out of service life safety system. A fire watch cannot be used as a technique to avoid or delay the installation of a required fire sprinkler, fire alarm, or other life safety system. Hot work requires that a fire watch last throughout the duration of the operation and at least 30 minutes after the conclusion of work. The 30 minute time period may be extended by the fire code official depending on the nature of work or hazards present.

Where a required fire protection system, such as a fire alarm, cannot be installed in a reasonable time frame due to national equipment shortages, a temporary certificate of occupancy can be issued where the following conditions are met:

1. Where required, the fire sprinkler system must fully operational even without the capability to send a signal to a monitoring agency.

2. Where available, an alternative means of integrating the new fire alarm system with an existing onsite fire alarm system will be accessed between the Aurora Building Division Fire Life/Life Safety Group and the installing contractor.

3. The applicant will provide a letter from the manufacturer validating the fire alarm equipment shortage and when the equipment is expected to be available to the installing contractor.

4. A letter from the contractor, on company letterhead, will be provided indicating the expected time frame for completion of work associated to the fire alarm equipment. The building owner/operator/property manager will be provided a signature block within this letter to assure they are aware of the fire watch agreements being established.

5. The Building Occupancy Type and Occupant Loading of a facility will utilized to access any additional requirements and/or responsibilities placed the third-party inspection firm conducting the fire watch.

### Who can be assigned to fire watch?

Persons assigned to fire watch should be familiar with the building or premises and have access to all areas to sufficiently perform their patrol duties. Assigned persons should also be well-versed in any and all emergency evacuation procedures, safety plans, alarm activation procedures, and have formal training in the proper use of fire extinguishers or other emergency safety equipment. Persons assigned to fire watch must have no other responsibilities but to perform the fire watch. In other words, an employee who is normally assigned to perform maintenance duties in a school cannot be assigned to a fire watch while cleaning floors; nor can a security guard at a public event perform door security and fire watch duties simultaneously—fire watch personnel shall have the sole responsibility of performing fire watch duties.

**What are the duties of fire watch personnel?**

- Fire watch personnel shall:
- Have access to one approved means of communication; know the exact address of the property, and how to report a fire or other emergency condition by calling 9-1-1.
- Be familiar with the buildings and property and have an accepted written plan for patrolling the property.
- Be trained in the use of fire extinguishers shall have access to all facility fire extinguishers and know their location.
- Have knowledge of and be trained in the facility's evacuation plan in the event of a fire. They shall be able to communicate with non-English speaking residents well enough to give an evacuation order.
- Not be permitted, while on duty, to perform any other duties.
- Not be impaired and shall remain awake and alert at all times.
- Keep a log of fire watch related activities. The log shall include; address of the facility, time of each patrol, name of the fire watch person, notes for other related activities performed. The log shall be faxed to (303.739.7551) or emailed to mdean@auroragov.org.
- Keep a constant watch for fires, be on the lookout for any obstructions to exits, and be alert to any other hazards during the time when the building or premises is open to the public, the hazardous activity is taking place, or throughout the duration of the fire alarm/sprinkler system being out of service.
- Are expected to correct any hazards found, extinguish small fires, contact the fire department, activate fire alarms, and assist with emergency evacuation procedures of the public.
- Patrol their areas at a minimum of 30-minute intervals.

**Are there any specific tools or equipment fire watch personnel need to perform their duties?**

Fire watch personnel need to be provided with a minimum of one (1), approved and reliable means of notification to the local fire department or fire alarm monitoring company. The "approved" means shall be determined by the local fire code official. Examples include a hard-wired telephone, cellular phone (with no dead-coverage areas), manual central station fire alarm, or radio.

**Finally, it is a requirement that all fire watch personnel record a log of their activity. The log shall have the following information:**

Name/Address of Building: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Responsible for Fire Watch: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Performing Fire Watch: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ a.m. p.m. Area patrolled: \_\_\_\_\_ Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ a.m. p.m. Area patrolled: \_\_\_\_\_ Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ a.m. p.m. Area patrolled: \_\_\_\_\_ Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ a.m. p.m. Area patrolled: \_\_\_\_\_ Status: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS OR CONCERNS:** We are always looking for ways to improve the website and our hand-outs for the codes. Please email permitcounter@auroragov.org with your comments and suggestions.  
  
"Colorado's only IAS Accredited Building Department"

Fire watch personnel shall also be provided access to fire extinguishing equipment (i.e., portable extinguishers) and have received adequate training on its safe use. During hot work operations, fire watch personnel shall be supplied a minimum of one portable fire extinguisher with a minimum 2A:20BC rating. This extinguisher shall be within 30 feet of the location where the hot work is performed. Fire watch and hot work personnel shall be trained on the proper use of fire extinguishers before performing these duties.

**How do you request a fire watch?**

If a fire watch is deemed necessary while an active building permit is in place then the Aurora Building Division will authorize the fire watch through the Field Inspectors Supervisors Office (303.739.7420). The Aurora Fire Department (303.326.8999) is responsible for approving any request for a fire watch where there is NOT a valid building permit in place.

**Who do I send the completed fire watch logs to?**

Daily notification of the completion of each fire watch must be provided to the Building Division prior to 9:00 AM on the morning after each scheduled fire watch the log shall be emailed or faxed to the contact shown below:

**Attn: Mike Dean**  
**City of Aurora Building Division**  
**Email: mdean@auroragov.org (subject line: Fire Watch)**  
**Log for (name and address of building)**

**Who do I notify when I complete a fire watch?**

A fire watch can only be removed where the Building Division has granted approval. Approval is typically based upon the issuance of a temporary or a full Certificate of Occupancy. Contact the Field Inspectors Supervisors Office by calling 303.739.7420.  
• Upon completion of a fire watch a building division representative must notify fire dispatch that the fire protection system(s) for the address (to include unit number) are in service by calling the non-emergency line at 303.627.3130