

NFPA 25 Sprinkler Impairment: Fire Watch Quick Reference

What Chapter 15 requires when a water-based fire protection system goes out of service

WHEN THE IMPAIRMENT PROGRAM STARTS

- Any sprinkler, standpipe, fire pump, or water-supply shutdown – planned or emergency
- Assign an impairment coordinator before work begins
- Tag the system at the riser and fire department connection
- Notify: fire department, alarm company, property insurer, building occupants

COMMON FIRE WATCH TRIGGERS

Situation	Typical requirement
System out 10+ hrs in 24 (adopted-code rule)	Evacuate or fire watch
Emergency impairment, building occupied	Fire watch until restored
Insurer Red Tag (e.g. FM Global)	Insurer rules – often stricter than code
Hot work during the outage	Separate hot-work watch (NFPA 51B)

FIRE WATCH DUTIES

- Continuous patrol of every unprotected area
- Ready means to notify the fire department (radio/phone tested)
- Alert occupants immediately if fire or smoke is found
- No other duties while on watch – watching is the job
- Observe and report; never attempt structural firefighting

DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Impairment tag record + coordinator name
- ☐ Notification log – who, when (FD, insurer, alarm co.)
- ☐ Patrol log – timestamped rounds, areas covered
- ☐ Hazards found and actions taken
- ☐ Restoration record – who authorized watch end

The hour count is not universal. Thresholds come from the code edition your jurisdiction adopted and your fire marshal. When in doubt, call the AHJ – and your insurer.

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