



# McDowell County Building Inspections

408 Spaulding Road, Marion, NC, 28752

## Fire Watch Requirements and Procedures

Per North Carolina Fire Code Chapter 9 Section 901.7

Where a required *fire protection system* is out of service, the fire department and **the fire code official** shall be notified immediately and, where required by the *fire code official*, the building shall be either 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.

McDowell County Fire Code Official MacKenzie Burnette can be reached at (828)-559-7313.

Where utilized, fire watches shall be provided with not less than one *approved* means for notification of the fire department and their only duty shall be to perform constant patrols of the protected premises and keep watch for fires.

### **Impairment coordinator.**

The building *owner* shall assign an impairment coordinator to comply with the requirements of this section. In the absence of a specific designee, the *owner* shall be considered the impairment coordinator.

### **901.7.4 Preplanned impairment programs.**

Preplanned impairments shall be authorized by the impairment coordinator. Before authorization is given, a designated individual shall be responsible for verifying that all of the following procedures have been implemented:

1. The extent and expected duration of the impairment have been determined.
2. The areas or buildings involved have been inspected and the increased risks determined.



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3. Recommendations have been submitted to management or the building *owner*/manager.
4. The fire department has been notified.
5. The insurance carrier, the alarm company, the building *owner*/manager and other authorities having jurisdiction have been notified.
6. The supervisors in the areas to be affected have been notified.
7. A tag impairment system has been implemented.
8. Necessary tools and materials have been assembled on the impairment site.

## **901.7.5 Emergency impairments.**

Where unplanned impairments occur, appropriate emergency action shall be taken to minimize potential injury and damage. The impairment coordinator shall implement the steps outlined in [Section 901.7.4](#).

## **901.7.6 Restoring systems to service.**

When impaired equipment is restored to normal working order, the impairment coordinator shall verify that all of the following procedures have been implemented:

1. Necessary inspections and tests have been conducted to verify that affected systems are operational.
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.
5. The impairment tag has been removed.

## **901.8 Removal of or tampering with equipment.**



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It shall be unlawful for any person to remove, tamper with or otherwise disturb any fire hydrant, fire detection and alarm system, fire suppression system or other fire appliance required by this code except for the purpose of extinguishing fire, training purposes, recharging or making necessary repairs or where *approved* by the *fire code official*.

## **901.8.1 Removal of or tampering with appurtenances.**

Locks, gates, doors, barricades, chains, enclosures, signs, tags or seals that have been installed by or at the direction of the *fire code official* shall not be removed, unlocked, destroyed, tampered with or otherwise vandalized in any manner.

## **GENERAL FIRE WATCH REQUIREMENTS**

- 1) Notify the McDowell County Fire Code Official of your system impairment at (828)-559-7313.
- 2) Fire watch personnel shall have the means to notify the fire department, and their only duty is to perform constant patrols of the currently unprotected premises and keep a watch for fires.
- 3) A proper log must be kept on-site for review by the fire code official. The log shall indicate the area that is patrolled, who the area is being patrolled by, the time period patrolled etc. Remember that this patrol log is to be continuous and constant. All records of Fire Watch shall be scanned and emailed daily to the fire code official at [mackenzie.burnette@mcdowellgov.com](mailto:mackenzie.burnette@mcdowellgov.com) by 09:00 AM every morning.
- 4) **The Fire code official must be notified when your fire protection system has been restored and must give permission for the fire watch to be discontinued.**