



POLK COUNTY FIRE RESCUE

400 Series

No. 405

Page 1 of 2

Revised: 04/01/15

Fire Prevention

SUBJECT: Fire Watch Policy

SCOPE:

This policy is to establish guidelines for situations needing a Fire Watch. Fire Watch for this policy is defined as diligent attention to potentially hazardous conditions that could result from incipient fire origination, injuries to persons within the specified area, and delayed notification of emergency services; **additionally**, this definition includes situations whereby Polk County Fire Rescue identifies the need to maintain fire scene control without dedicating front-line personnel and units. Such latter situations may include large/complex fires where re-ignition is a possibility, lengthy investigations, wildland fires, etc.

Procedure:

Situations needing established Fire Watch include, but are not limited to: fire suppression systems out of service for periods of more than four hours (NFPA 1/101), fire alarms systems out of service for periods of more than four hours (NFPA 1/101), incidental occupancy use as a place of assembly where there is a requirement for the presence fire suppression system/fire alarm systems but no fire suppression system/fire alarm system exists, organized fireworks displays, providing scene integrity after fire for investigative purposes, to allow frontline companies to return to service following a fire or disaster, and crowd management/control. Establishment of Fire Watch will be initiated by Chief Officers (Battalion or Deputy Chiefs including Fire Marshal) or at the request to a Chief Officer from a Company Officer familiar and aware of the need, such as in situations of fire scene integrity or control.

Any Polk County Fire Rescue members selected for Fire Watch duties in lieu of protection systems (sprinklers or fire alarms) shall be Florida State Certified Fire Safety Inspector I or higher. Members selected for fire watch details involving fireworks standby (not fireworks inspection) will be Firefighter II (FF II) certified with part-time members (primary) or Department Seniority utilized for selection. Rotation of personnel selected will occur in order to prevent monopolization by any one member. A roster shall be created for non-fire scene situations with all certified Fire Safety Inspectors organized by department seniority. When a person works, they shall be placed on the bottom of the list and would not work until all persons above them have had an opportunity to work, same for FF II members.

Process:

Equipment necessary for Fire Watch will include a portable radio, and, depending on the situation, may include Structural Fire Fighting Protective Clothing for firefighting standby (fire scene security), and a firefighting capable vehicle (Brush Unit, Reserve Apparatus, etc) for scene security cases. A radio designation will be established for each fire watch and coordinated with Dispatch.

The primary focus of Fire Watch is for early alert of the emergency services and evacuation of citizens from the area of concern. After the aforementioned alerting and evacuation is

accomplished, protective measures such as fire extinguishers and onsite fire apparatus can be utilized. Dispatch will advise responding units of a Department member on scene. Fire Watch personnel will verbally report to responding units all actions and accountability undertaken prior to arrival of response units and will assist responding crews in a manner within their capabilities.

Funding:

The following table shall be utilized for the calculations of expenses associated with Fire Watch. This schedule utilizes the format and logic associated with the current Fee Schedule adopted in 2012 by the Board of County Commissioners, specifically the EMS Standby Fee found on page 15 of the aforementioned document which is calculated on two personnel resources and the Medic Unit at essentially an hourly rate of \$50.00 per person.

Resource/Need	Purpose	Rate/Time	Total Cost*
Certified Fire Safety Inspector	Prevention Fire Watch/Inspection/Crowd Management Situations	\$50.00/hour 4-Hour Minimum*	\$200.00 (billed to requestor of services)/Additional at the same hourly rate
<u>On-duty</u> Fire Watch Crews	Post-fire scene control, etc.	No additional charge	Incorporated into personnel expenses of budget.
<u>Off-duty</u> Fire Watch Crews. Preference to Part-time employees	Post-fire scene control, etc	\$ Hourly Rate <u>Per person.</u>	Employees' hourly salary rate with FLSA considerations (1.5 times salary if actual overtime). Total Cost incorporated into personnel expenses of the budget.

Fire Watch fees associated with Fire Prevention situations shall be invoiced by the Fire Prevention Branch in a manner similar to the fee schedule currently in place for re-inspection fees. Fire Watch fees associated with off-duty fire scene standby will be handled in the manner of overtime or Special Detail staffing. On-duty assignments for Fire Watch shall be handled by the on-duty Battalion Chief in close coordination with their respective Deputy Chief. These types of situations are totally unpredictable but will be considered when the need arises. What cannot occur is a decrease in level of service to our community.

This Policy is authorized by County Manager and effective immediately. This fee shall be incorporated into the next revision of the Polk County Board of Commissioners Fee Schedule.



 James P. Freeman, County Manager

Date: 1 April 2015