Sterling Fire Protection

# Sprinkler impairment and fire watch checklist

What to do before, during and after a sprinkler or fire alarm shutdown in Alberta, and where the fire code asks for a fire watch.

**CODE EDITION**
**NFC(AE) 2023, NFPA 25-2017 Chapter 15**

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## Before the system goes out of service

- [ ] Assign an impairment coordinator who authorizes planned shutdowns.
- [ ] Have a notification procedure for tests, repairs and alterations (Division B, 6.1.1.3).
- [ ] Line up alternative measures for the whole shutdown. Routine testing counts as a temporary shutdown (6.1.1.4).
- [ ] For sprinklers, the code note lists emergency hose lines, portable extinguishers, extra fire watch and, where practicable, temporary water connections.
- [ ] Tell the fire department, your insurer, the alarm company, the owner and area supervisors.
- [ ] Tag the control valve and the fire department connection.

## While it is out

- [ ] Keep the alternative measures running until service is restored.
- [ ] If sprinklers are out for more than 10 hours in a 24-hour period, put at least one of these in place: evacuating the area, an approved fire watch, temporary water, or an approved program to eliminate ignition sources and limit fuel.
- [ ] If a fire alarm or part of it is out for more than 2 hours for any reason, notify the fire department and, when directed, provide continuous surveillance until it is restored (Division C, 2.2.7.2).
- [ ] Warn occupants with a procedure agreed in advance. The code note says to put the agreed measures in the fire safety plan.
- [ ] Anyone shutting down or impairing a hydrant has to make sure the fire department is notified and approves, and that the hydrant is marked in a way it accepts (2.2.7.2(5)).

## Restoring service

- [ ] Test what was touched.
- [ ] Confirm every valve is open and secured.
- [ ] Take the tags off.
- [ ] Tell the same people you told at the start: the fire department, the monitoring company, your insurer and the building owner.
- [ ] Keep the record. Report deficiencies that affect operation or coverage to EFRS within 24 hours.

## Where the fire code asks for a fire watch

- Hot work outside a noncombustible area: continuous during the work and for at least 60 minutes afterward, with a final inspection 4 hours after completion (Division B, 5.2.3).
- Demolition sites while part of the building is occupied, and occupied construction with no fire alarm: tours at intervals of no more than 1 hour (5.6.1.14).
- Impairments: the alternative measures come from the fire department, the NFPA 25 program and your insurer.

*We could not find a published Edmonton rule on patrol intervals for an impairment watch, or on who may stand it. Agree it with EFRS Fire Prevention before a planned shutdown.*

## Sources


1. National Fire Code 2023 Alberta Edition, National Research Council Canada
   https://nrc-publications.canada.ca/eng/view/ft/?id=6c3e5cf6-8891-40e0-8b37-a78665c23f27&dp=2&dsl=en
2. Impairment Procedures for Sprinkler Systems That Are Out of Order, NFPA
   https://www.nfpa.org/news-blogs-and-articles/blogs/2022/06/17/impairment-procedures-for-sprinkler-systems-that-are-out-of-order
3. Fire Inspection Report Submission, City of Edmonton
   https://www.edmonton.ca/programs_services/fire_rescue/fire-inspection-report-submission


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