

Frequently Asked Questions: Hypothermia Prevention Program

Who manages and operates the Fairfax County Hypothermia Prevention Program?

The Hypothermia Prevention Program is managed by the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, part of the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development. The Office to Prevent and End Homelessness contracts with local nonprofit organizations to operate the shelters. Additionally, local faith communities also provide significant support through their donations of food and other materials and by volunteering.

Who stays at the Hypothermia Prevention Shelters?

Individuals who are homeless and who have no options for sheltering are served at Hypothermia Prevention Shelters. Last year, shelters served an average of 215 guests each night.

How do guests get to the Hypothermia Prevention Shelters?

Most guests use public transportation to get to Hypothermia Prevention Shelters – often with financial assistance from the contracted nonprofits which manage the locations. In some instances, limited transportation may be provided by our nonprofit partners to support the program.

What do shelter guests do during the daytime?

Many guests will leave the shelter and go to work, search for housing or go to other personal appointments during the day. Guests may remain at the shelter all day and are engaged by staff and volunteers in activities to promote health, safety and greater self-sufficiency.

Who maintains the Hypothermia Prevention Shelters?

All of the designated locations for the 2020-2021 program year are maintained by Fairfax County Facilities Management Department or the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority. Contractors are hired to provide additional cleaning to meet the established cleaning protocols due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



A publication of Fairfax County, Virginia



EVACUATION PLANNING GUIDELINE

HYPOTHERMIA CENTERS

FAIRFAX COUNTY HYPOTHERMIA PREVENTION PROGRAM

Office of the Fire Marshal

10700 Page Avenue

Fairfax, Virginia 22030

Telephone: 703-246-4849

Fax: 703-246-4872

TTY: 711 or 1-800-828-1120

This publication outlines the evacuation planning requirements for facilities operating an approved temporary hypothermia center providing transient overnight sleeping accommodations as part of the Fairfax County Hypothermia Prevention Program. The content of this publication is based in part on the requirements for evacuation planning outlined in Chapter 4 of the *Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC)*. Questions regarding the content of this publication and evacuation plans for temporary hypothermia centers should be directed to the Special Projects Unit of the Fire Inspections Branch at **703-246-4865, TTY 711**.

OVERVIEW

- Facilities conditionally approved by the Fairfax County Building Official to establish and operate a temporary hypothermia center are required to prepare an evacuation plan.
- Evacuation plans shall be reviewed and approved by the Fire Marshal at the above address or at the hypothermia center location during the first annual compliance inspection. This annual inspection is conducted before the hypothermia center opening date; therefore, evacuation plans must be prepared well in advance of the hypothermia center opening date.
- The scope of the plan should include all areas of the facility associated with the operation of the approved hypothermia center. Review this entire publication prior to preparing the plan.
- A sample evacuation plan is provided on page three; it may be used as a plan template.

PLAN CONTENTS

The evacuation plan required for a temporary hypothermia center consists of three (3) parts:

(1) Facility Floor Plan (2) Evacuation Diagrams (3) Evacuation Plan (*Narrative or Outline*)

FACILITY FLOOR PLAN (Part 1). The facility floor plan does not have to be drawn by a design professional but shall clearly illustrate and label the following information:

1. Location of the hypothermia center (label all associated rooms, sections, floors, and/or wings)
2. Location of all exit corridors, exit stairs, and exits serving all hypothermia center areas
3. Location of all designated sleeping areas, cooking areas, and material storage areas
4. Entrance for emergency responders to quickly access the hypothermia center
5. Primary and secondary evacuation routes leading to the designated outside assembly areas.
** *Use solid lines to show the primary route and dashed lines to show the secondary route* **
6. Location of all fire alarm system manual activation stations and all portable fire extinguishers

EVACUATION DIAGRAM (Part 2). A diagram depicting two evacuation routes shall be posted on or immediately adjacent to every required egress door from each designated sleeping area. Evacuation routes and designated exits shall be clearly shown on each evacuation diagram.

EVACUATION PLAN (Part 3). Evacuation plans shall contain the following information:**1. Reporting Fire Emergencies & Occupant Notification**

- A. Describe the preferred means and any alternative means of reporting fires and other emergencies to the fire department or emergency response organizations (911). When describing the means for reporting fires and other emergencies, consider the following:
 - Immediate Notification Required. In the event an unwanted fire occurs on a property or upon activation of a fire alarm, employees or staff shall immediately notify the fire department (911) and implement the evacuation plan.
 - Staff Emergency Duties. Upon discovery of a fire or suspected fire, hypothermia center staff shall activate the fire alarm system, where provided, and immediately notify the fire department (911) and implement the evacuation plan.
 - Delayed Notification Prohibited. A person shall not, by verbal or written directive, require any delay in the reporting of a fire to the fire department (911).
- B. Describe the preferred and any alternative means of notifying occupants of a fire or emergency, and where provided, include a description of the emergency voice/alarm communication system alert tone and preprogrammed voice messages.

2. Evacuation & Accountability of Occupants

- A. Designate emergency egress or escape routes, and whether evacuation of the building is to be complete or, where approved, by selected floors or areas only.
- B. Explain the life safety strategy and procedures for notifying, relocating, or evacuating occupants, including occupants who need assistance.
- C. Designate the evacuation assembly area(s) outside and away from the building.
- D. Explain the procedures for accounting for occupants after evacuation has been completed.

3. Staff Emergency Response Duties & Occupancy Hazards

- A. Explain the procedures for staff that must remain to operate critical equipment before evacuating, if applicable.
- B. Explain the procedures for assisted rescue of persons unable to use the general means of egress unassisted, if applicable.
- C. List the identification and assignment of personnel/staff responsible for rescue or emergency medical aid, if applicable.
- D. List all major fire hazards associated with the normal use and occupancy of the premises, including maintenance and housekeeping procedures.
- E. List the identification and assignment of personnel responsible for fire protection systems, maintenance, housekeeping and controlling fuel hazard sources.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Once you have completed all parts of the evacuation plan, double-check the plan to ensure that all requirements outlined in this publication are addressed as applicable to the hypothermia center. Then, assemble two (2) copies of the completed plan, along with one (1) copy of the current "Hypothermia Site Visit Report" issued by the Fairfax County Building Official, and make arrangements to have the plan approved by the Office of the Fire Marshal as specified above (i.e., submit to the Fire Marshal or make available for review during the first annual inspection).

Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. Materials such as this publication may be available in alternate formats. To request reasonable ADA accommodations or materials in alternative formats, call the Office of the Fire Marshal at 703-246-4803 (TTY: 711 or 1-800-828-1120) or write us at the following address: 10700 Page Avenue, Fairfax, VA 22030.



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CODE COMPLIANCE GUIDELINE

FIRE WATCH PERSONNEL

REQUIRED DUTIES AND EMERGENCY RESPONDER NOTIFICATION

This publication outlines the *Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code* (i.e., Fire Prevention Code or SFPC) requirements related to the (i) duties of fire watch personnel and (ii) requirements for emergency responder notification. This publication is not an *Order of Fire Watch*, which is a legal order issued by the Fire Marshal, but rather a guide to those persons responsible for conducting a fire watch and calling for help in the event of an unwanted fire or emergency.

Questions regarding the content of this publication should be directed to the Fire Inspections Branch at 703-246-4849 during regular office hours, Monday thru Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

OVERVIEW

There are generally two circumstances when the Office of the Fire Marshal requires a fire watch in a building or occupancy for the purpose of enhancing life safety: 1) Special activities and/or at-risk occupancies; 2) Out of service fire protection systems. A fire watch is accomplished through the use of dedicated, informed, and trained fire watch personnel having an increased level of situational awareness, along with the knowledge of what to do if a fire is discovered. The focus of the fire watch is three-fold: (a) Compensate for a potentially reduced level of occupant self-preservation; (b) Guard against a condition posing an increased risk to the occupants; and/or (c) Compensate for a reduced level of fire protection resulting from an out of service fire protection system (e.g., fire alarm, fire sprinkler, fire pump, etc.).

- **Special Activities and/or At-Risk Occupancies.** In accordance with sections 403.11.1 and 403.11.1.1 of the Fire Prevention Code, when in the opinion of the fire code official, it is essential for public safety in a place of assembly or any other place where people congregate, because of the number of persons, or the nature of the performance, exhibition, display, contest or activity, the owner, agent or lessee shall provide one or more fire watch personnel, as required and approved, to remain on duty during the times such places are open to the public, or when an activity requiring a fire watch is being conducted.
- **Out of Service Fire Protection Systems.** In accordance with Section 901.7 of the Fire Prevention Code (as amended by Fairfax County), where a fire protection system is out of service, the fire official may order an approved fire watch for all premises left unprotected by the shut down until the fire protection system has been returned to service.

FIRE WATCH PERSONNEL

In accordance with sections 403.11.1.2 of the Fire Prevention Code, fire watch personnel shall:

1. Keep diligent watch for fires, obstructions to means of egress and other hazards.
2. Take prompt measures for remediation of hazards and extinguishment of fires that occur.
3. Take prompt measures to assist in the evacuation of the public from the structure.

EMERGENCY RESPONDER NOTIFICATION

In accordance with sections 401.3, 901.7, and 5003.3.1 of the Fire Prevention Code (as amended by Fairfax County), notification of emergency responders shall be as follows:

- **Fire Events.** In the event an unwanted fire occurs on a property, the owner or occupant shall immediately notify the fire department (911) and implement the evacuation plan. When an unwanted fire is discovered, do not delay! Notify the occupants, evacuate the structure as appropriate, and immediately call 911! Remember, a person shall not, by verbal or written directive, require any delay in the reporting of a fire!
- **Alarm Activations.** Upon activation of a fire alarm signal, employees or staff shall immediately notify the fire department (911) and implement the evacuation plan. This includes activation of monitored fire alarms designed to automatically call the fire department upon activation; employees or staff must also call 911 to report the fire alarm signal.
- **Hazardous Materials Release.** Any person who witnesses, discovers, or otherwise has knowledge of a spill, leak or other release of a hazardous material or other material that may negatively impact the environment, regardless of quantity, shall immediately report such spill, leak or release to the Department of Public Safety Communications (DPSC) by calling 911.
- **Out of Service Fire Protection Systems.** Where a fire protection system is out of service, the fire department and the fire code official shall be notified immediately by calling the Office of the Fire Marshal at 703-246-4821 during regular office hours (M-F, 7a-3p). Otherwise, call DPSC after-hours at 703-691-2131 to make this non-emergency notification.
- **Delayed Notification Prohibited.** A person shall not, by verbal or written directive, require any delay in the reporting of a fire to the fire department.
- **False Report Prohibited.** It is unlawful for a person to give, signal, or transmit a false alarm.
- **Interference with F.D. Operations Prohibited.** It shall be unlawful to interfere with, attempt to interfere with, conspire to interfere with, obstruct or restrict the mobility of or block the path of travel of a fire department emergency vehicle in any way, or to interfere with, attempt to interfere with, conspire to interfere with, obstruct or hamper any fire department operation.

DOCUMENTING THE FIRE WATCH

When a fire watch is conducted, and involves periodic patrols or tours of the areas of the structure or occupancy on fire watch, or when a fire watch log is specifically required, the following minimum information must be recorded in a written record such as this:

FIRE WATCH LOG					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Tour Start</u>	<u>Tour End</u>	<u>Areas Checked</u>	<u>Findings/Actions</u>	<u>Name</u>
4/15/12	0700	0720	All Floors	Clear	J. Firewatch
4/15/12	0800	0820	All Floors	Clear	J. Firewatch
4/15/12	0900	0925	All Floors	Smoke on 4 th floor, 911 Called, alerted occupants.	J. Firewatch

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