

## TASK OUTLINE

Effective Date: 10-05-2005

Approved By: Vice President for Business & Financial Affairs

See Also: POL U5950.01 –Health, Safety and Environmental Protection  
Business and Financial Affairs Procedures 5000.04A and 5000.04B response to fire alarms

### TSK- U5950.01A Fire Watch Duties

A fire watch is sometimes needed when there has been a reduction in a facility's life-safety feature or a potentially hazardous condition exists. As an example, part of a building's detection or alarm system may not operate normally due to a malfunction. Fire watches are sometimes required by local and state regulation.

The express purposes for assigning a person to an area or building as a fire watch are:

- Notifying the fire department, the building occupants or both of an emergency,
- Preventing a fire from occurring,
- Extinguishing a small fire, if possible, and
- Protecting the public from fire or changes in life-safety conditions.

#### ***When assigned the duties of a fire watch, the responsible person:***

1. **Conducts** an on-going, roving surveillance of the assigned area, which would include moving between floors in a multi-floor building.

**NOTE:** If possible, **brings** an orange vest and **wears** it to perform fire watch duties. Vests are available from Environmental Health and Safety.

2. If a fire emergency occurs, immediately **sounds** the alarm. **Does** this in the following ways:

2A. **Pulls** the nearest fire alarm, if it is functional

OR

**Calls** 911 from a safe place, and then **calls** x3911  
(University Police Dispatch)

2B. **Notifies** persons in the immediate area.

3. **Initiates** evacuation from the building.
4. **ONLY** if trained to use an extinguisher and able to do so without danger to self or others, **uses** an extinguisher on a small fire.

**DOES NOT delay notification or evacuation to fight a fire.**

5. If it can be done safely, **closes** doors and windows while leaving.
6. While waiting for emergency responders, **assembles** occupants in a safe place, upwind.

**NOTE: Uses** the designated building meeting location, if known.

7. **Meets** the responding University Police vehicle and **provides** as much pertinent information as possible about the emergency.
8. **Waits** outside at the police vehicle or near the responding fire truck to provide assistance.

## Fire Fighting Information

### How to Use a Portable Fire Extinguisher

Remember the acronym, “P.A.S.S.:

<b>P</b>	<b>Pull</b> the pin. Some extinguishers require releasing a lock latch, pressing a puncture lever or taking another first step
<b>A</b>	<b>Aim</b> low. Point the extinguisher nozzle (or its horn or hose) at the base of the flames
<b>S</b>	<b>Squeeze</b> the trigger or handle while holding the extinguisher upright. This releases the extinguishing agent.
<b>S</b>	<b>Sweep</b> the extinguisher from side to side. Keep the extinguisher aimed at the base of the fire and sweep back and forth covering the area of the fire with the extinguishing agent until it appears to be out.  Watch the fire area. If the fire breaks out again, repeat the process.

### Hazards and Precautions for Fighting a Fire with a Portable Extinguisher

Before you begin to fight a small fire:

- Make sure everyone has left or is leaving the building.
- Make sure the fire department has been called.
- Be certain the fire is confined to a small area, such as a wastebasket, and that it is not spreading beyond the immediate area.
- Be sure that your back is to a safe and unobstructed exit to which the fire will not spread.
- Be sure that your extinguisher is the proper size and type for the fire at hand and that you know how to use it.

***It is reckless to fight a fire with an extinguisher in any other circumstances.*** Instead, leave immediately, close off the area, and leave the fire for the fire department.