

# 01000S05-Bypassing Fire Alarm System Points – Medical Center

## INFORMATION:

The Medical Center fire alarm systems in the various buildings are often tested, modified and/or repaired. Construction or other maintenance activity may trigger the alarms if precautions are not taken. We must minimize calling an entire fire alarm system out of service leaving a building area vulnerable since it will be without early detection as afforded by smoke detectors. However, there are times when, under certain conditions, the alarm systems must be shut down or bypassed.

## POLICY:

Every effort will be made by MC-PPD. to minimize false alarms due to construction, maintenance for which we are responsible. When the need arises, the fire alarm system may be shut down for a brief period of time to make alterations, repairs, perform tests, or for troubleshooting. When this occurs, alternate means of fire protection will be provided. The preferred method of disabling smoke detectors in a specific area is to bypass the point in question. Whenever possible, only the area where work is actually being performed shall have the fire alarm system disabled in this manner. In all cases, the system or points shall not be left in bypass overnight unless alternate protection has been provided.

## PROCEDURES:

If work activity is likely to "set off" the alarms, the standard operating procedure will be followed.

### **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR BYPASSING FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS**

On major construction and renovation projects, at least a three day notice is required from the person requesting the outage. The outage request form must be completed with appropriate signatures.

The person requesting the alarm outage will contact the systems supervisor or the fire alarm system mechanic authorized to bypass the points requested.

If Medical Center job order work requires evening or night activity, the request for bypass service must be initiated by 12:00 noon before the evening or night of the planned activity. Emergency situations will be handled on a case by case basis.

Minor projects during normal hours will be accommodated as soon as possible. However, advance ample notice should be given to avoid last minute requests.

Smoke detectors may be bagged with a sandwich bag. Latex gloves of any kind shall not be used. The bypass form shall be completed regardless of the method used to bypass a point.

The authorized systems mechanic must take appropriate steps when calling out a system which should never be taken casually. Each building is slightly different; however, the call out procedure is the same.

Work in areas with duct detectors also will require the detector point to be bypassed at the Simplex 2120. If in doubt about the existence of duct detectors, contact the systems supervisor.

Whenever points are bypassed on the Simplex 2120, the Security Office (3-6156) and Director, Manager or Nursing Manager of the area bypassed must be notified by the Project Coordinator. After the system is restored, the Director, Manager, or Nursing Manager must be notified again.

The fire alarm outage report must be completed by the monitor and filed and/or the bypass points must be logged in the bypass log sheet in H-64.

For annex buildings, a bypass log will be maintained for each remote panel at the H-64 location.

When an area is bypassed or shut down for an extended period of time without an approved alternate detection system, a fire watch will go into effect for the area. The contractor must provide the fire watch. Under no circumstances, will PPD provide the watch for such projects.

A fire watch will be initiated by the project manager or contractor. This will consist of vigilance to observe by smell, sight, feel, and sound.

The person on fire watch shall walk through the bypassed area at least once per hour.

If a fire is suspected or observed, they shall immediately call 911 to report the findings.

Upon restoration of the alarm system, the fire watch may be discontinued.

### **Alternative System**

1. If the fire alarm system is **out of service**, a fire watch person will patrol high risk areas affected by the outage until the system is reactivated. High risk areas are defined as follows:

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- a. Mechanical Rooms
- b. Penthouses
- c. Storerooms
- d. Linen Storage Areas
- e. Trash Collection Areas
- f. Incinerator Room
- g. Paint Shop
- h. Carpenter Shop
- i. Patient Floors

All personnel involved with a fire watch shall be appropriately trained, and know how to use a fire extinguisher.

2. When a fire is discovered while the fire alarm system is **out of service** the fire watch person will:
  1. Rescue patient(s)/person(s) from area and close door.
  2. Contact the paging operator to request a "Green Grass" page.
  3. Pull fire alarm and call 911 to give location of fire.
  4. Notify Security.
  5. Assist in evacuation.
  6. Meet fire department personnel and advise of situation.  
Remember: Patient Safety 1st, Fire Suppression 2nd