

NFPA No.

601

GUARD SERVICE

IN FIRE LOSS
PREVENTION

1975



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NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

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MGR-FM-75

Recommendations for GUARD SERVICE in Fire Loss Prevention

NFPA No. 601 — 1975

This text, Recommendations for Guard Service in Fire Loss Prevention, was adopted by the National Fire Protection Association at its Annual Meeting in 1968 and reconfirmed at its Fall Meeting in 1975. This text, NFPA No. 601—1975, contains recommendations to management in the selection and training of individuals to perform guard services as may be required to protect a property against fire loss. NFPA No. 601A—1975 provides a basis on which property management may prepare specific written instructions for guards in their employ or under contract.

Origin and Development of No. 601

This text dates from 1925 when the NFPA Committee on Field Practice presented a set of advisory rules called "The Watchman," which were adopted and published by the NFPA. Jurisdiction for the publication was transferred in 1948 to the Committee on Fire Brigades and Watchmen, which presented revisions under the title, "The Watchman, Recommended Manual of Instruction and Duties for the Plant Watchman or Guard," which were adopted in 1951. Amendments were adopted in 1956 and in 1968.

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This list represents the membership at the time the Committee was balloted on the text of this edition. Since that time, changes in the membership may have occurred.

**Interpretation Procedure of the Committee on
Loss Prevention Procedures and Practices**

Those desiring an interpretation shall supply the Chairman with five identical copies of a statement in which shall appear specific reference to a single problem, paragraph, or section. Such a statement shall be on the business stationery of the inquirer and shall be duly signed.

When applications involve actual field situations they shall so state and all parties involved shall be named.

The Interpretations Committee will reserve the prerogative to refuse consideration of any application that refers specifically to proprietary items of equipment or devices. Generally inquiries should be confined to interpretation of the literal text or the intent thereof.

Requests for interpretations should be addressed to the National Fire Protection Association, 470 Atlantic Avenue, Boston, MA 02210.

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**Recommendations for
GUARD SERVICE
in Fire Loss Prevention**

NFPA No. 601 — 1975

Protection of persons and property against hazards of fire is a management responsibility. These are recommendations to management in the selection and training of individuals to perform guard services as may be required to protect a property against fire loss. These services generally fall into three categories to: (1) facilitate and control the movement of persons within the property, (2) carry out procedures for the orderly conduct of some operations at the property, and (3) protect the property at times when the management is not present. Guards may be employees of management or employees of outside firms established to provide these services on a contract basis. The duties of these individuals may be supplemented, or in some cases replaced in part, by various approved protective signaling systems.

10. GUARD SERVICE DIRECTION

11. Management Responsibility. The property manager himself should supervise guard service, or designate a responsible person to handle it for him, such as the fire loss prevention manager. The fire loss prevention manager should be consulted in setting up procedures of guard service affecting fire loss prevention. Procedures and specific instructions to guards should be geared to specific actions required.

General instructions or superficial training are of little value. Meaningful specific instructions cannot be prepared without the investment of some time and thought by the management of the property. See Recommendations for Management Control of Fire Emergencies, NFPA No. 7 — 1974.

Management of any property has responsibility for fire loss prevention and for making plans in some detail for specific actions which are to be taken when fire breaks out. Where there is a public fire department, and that department has not already initiated a pre-fire plan for the property, the management should initiate it, calling in the proper officers of the department and developing plans for a variety of situations in the property. The objective should be to anticipate, as far as possible, the emergencies which are likely to confront guards and other personnel.

The term "fire loss prevention manager" is used to describe the functions of a person in management. It is not necessarily intended to be a model title for all plant persons to whom are assigned the described responsibilities. His responsibilities are described in detail in Recommendations for Organization of Industrial Fire Loss Prevention, NFPA No. 6-1974.

12. Succession to Supervisory Responsibility. Management should establish a clear line of succession in event of absences. Even when there are only two guards employed, one should be designated leader.

13. Contract Guard Service. Supervision of guards from outside firms should be through the designated representatives of the company providing the guard service. That company should be given, in its contract or supplementary documents, as full details as possible regarding the services expected. The qualifications of the contracting company selected to perform guard services should be carefully checked to be sure it is capable of performing the guard service required.

The following are some of the important items to check concerning the company being considered:

(a) Does the company make a pre-employment investigation of all of its employees?

(b) Does the company have a training program for its guards?

(c) Does the company have an adequate supervisory system?

(d) Does the company have a reporting system to keep management informed?

(e) Does the company have sufficient insurance to cover any incident that may occur as a result of the negligence of its employees? (Ask to be made an additional insured under the policy of the company selected, and get a copy of the insurance certificate to protect your company.)

(f) What qualifications are necessary for employment by the guard service company?

(g) Does the contracting guard service company have good references? (Check references wherever possible. Visit installations being protected by the guard service.)

14. Maintenance of Equipment. Management should establish procedures for the maintenance of equipment provided for supervision of guards. Even where equipment used in supervision of guard service is obtained under contract, management should assure itself that the necessary maintenance procedures for each type of equipment are being satisfactorily performed.

20. COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

21. Communications Requirement. Guards should be provided with facilities for communication within and outside of the property.

22. Protective Signaling Systems. Protective signaling systems should be designed and operated so as to minimize interruptions of communications service and so that they can be promptly restored to service if physically damaged. Local protective signaling systems should be designed to give signals for supervision of guard service at the property protected. With proprietary protective signaling systems, the property management should provide a control center at the property protected and the necessary qualified operators and runners. Management should provide competent and experienced personnel to have general supervision of the system, to do the necessary maintenance, and to cause tests and inspections to be made to keep the system properly operative. Where the management does not itself provide these facilities and their maintenance, it should provide them by contract.

Communications systems may use telephone, telegraph, radio and other components. For guard service communications, ordinary extension telephones and portable radios could be used if sufficient personnel is provided for a high degree of reliability of operation and maintenance of equipment. Protective signaling systems embody features of design and arrangement to obtain the needed reliability with minimum costs for operation and maintenance. What distinguishes these from their ordinary telephone or radio counterparts is the fact that each is designed as a "system" in which reliability as well as communication service requirements is recognized.

Persons may be provided in control stations with "local" protective signaling systems, but such systems are generally designed for situations where operators or runners are not provided. "Proprietary" protective signaling systems are those operated and maintained by the property management itself and provide a comprehensive service, including operators on duty and runners available.

Service of "central station" protective signaling systems may be as comprehensive as that for which the property management wishes to contract. The general experience with all protective signaling systems is that their dependability is directly proportional to the amount and effective character of maintenance, testing and supervision, and that these functions are best performed when the property management contracts for service with an outside agency known to be qualified in the handling of central station service.

See the following:

Standard for the Installation, Maintenance and Use of Local Protective Signaling Systems for Watchman, Fire Alarm and Supervisory Service. NFPA No. 72A - 1974.

Standard for the Installation, Maintenance and Use of Proprietary Protective Signaling Systems for Watchman, Fire Alarm and Supervisory Service. NFPA No. 72D - 1974.

Standard for the Installation, Maintenance and Use of Central Station Signaling Systems. NFPA No. 71 - 1974.

23. Patrolmen's Clocks and Time Recording Systems. Where patrolmen's clocks or time recording systems are used to assure the performance of patrols, the property management should establish, on the patrolman's route, a series of stations for the patrolman to visit. For patrolmen's clocks, each station should provide a key which produces a record of time and station when inserted in the clock. For time recording systems, each station should have a device which, when operated, makes a record of the time and station on a recorder at the control center. Patrolmen should not be permitted to change the time record charts. The changing and review of these charts should be done by the property manager or some responsible person for him, such as the fire loss prevention manager. Management should adopt a practice of promptly reviewing the time records of patrolmen, dating and filing them for review by representatives of any authority having jurisdiction. Management should investigate irregularities thoroughly.

Listed patrolmen's clocks and time recording systems provide a means of checking that patrols have been actually made as planned. Time recording systems provide a contact with the patrolman on his route only when the point at which the time recording clock is located is manned and the clock dial is constantly visible. A simple and reliable arrangement of a time recording system consists of electric wires from each patrolman's station to the central recorder.

24. Compulsory Tour Systems. For compulsory tour systems, stations for the patrolman to visit should be provided together with the station equipment and special patrolmen's keys required for such systems.

Compulsory tour systems reduce signal traffic. In one variation, each station is wired to the central time recorder. Each station has a clockworks which will transmit a signal unless the patrolman reaches the station within a predetermined period. Another variation has only certain stations connected to the central time recorder which saves some wiring. In this variation, the patrolman must visit the intermediate stations in a required order. At each intermediate station a special key he carries is given a changed setting. If he visits the stations of his compulsory tour in the right order, the key will be set just right to operate a wired station. There may be as many as nine unwired stations between wired stations.

25. Delinquency Indication. For delinquency indication service, equipment in patrolmen's stations should be designed to notify the guard control center when the patrolman does not reach it

within a prescribed time period. Where such service is used, the control center should be manned and runners or guards should be available to be dispatched to investigate the patrolman's failure.

26. Guard Control Center. A control center should provide a point with which guards may communicate. The center should have communication facilities to points outside the property.

Such a center is needed even when there is very limited guard service. For example, in a plant with only one or two guards, this center might be simply a room with a telephone to outside. Even with central station service a control center in the property could often be useful.

27. Manning the Guard Control Center. Where the equipment for guard communications, including those on patrol, requires that signals from guards be monitored, the control center should be provided with an operator. Additional operators and around-the-clock operator service should be provided at the control center according to the character of guard service provided. For some services, runners or guards who can be dispatched to investigate signals, should also be provided.

28. Directory. At the control center should be kept, in visible index or other convenient form, a directory of names, telephone numbers and other information to assist making emergency calls to outside. This directory should give information about key management personnel to be reached by the guards and about the public fire departments and other outside agencies which may need to be reached in an emergency.

30. GUARD SERVICE FUNCTIONS

31. Number of Guards. A sufficient number of guards should be provided to accomplish the needed services. If a guard is assigned to part-time duties in addition to his regular guard services, these duties should be chosen so as not to interfere with his regular guard service.

32. Guard Service to Facilitate and Control Movement of People. Guard service should be established to:

- (a) Prevent entry of unauthorized persons who might set a fire or do damage.
- (b) Control the activities of people authorized to be on the property, but who may not be aware of procedures established for the prevention of fire.
- (c) Control of pedestrian and vehicular traffic during exit drills and evacuation of the property or parts of it during emergencies.
- (d) Control of gates and vehicular traffic to facilitate access to the property by the public fire department, members of any private fire brigade and of off-duty management personnel in case of fire and emergencies.

33. Protection Function of Guard Service. Guard service should be established to carry out certain procedures for the orderly conduct of the operations in the property, including procedures for fire loss prevention both by personnel associated with the property and outside contractors.

- (a) Checking permits for hot work including cutting and welding and standing by where necessary to operate fire extinguishing equipment on such work.
- (b) Detecting conditions likely to cause a fire, such as leaks, spills and faulty equipment.
- (c) Detecting conditions likely to reduce the effectiveness with which a fire may be controlled, such as portable fire extinguishers not in place, sprinkler valves not open and water supplies impaired.
- (d) Performing operations to assure that fire equipment will function effectively. These may include testing automatic sprinkler and other fixed fire protection systems, fire pumps and other equipment related to these systems and assisting in maintenance of this equipment, checking portable fire extinguishers and fire hose and

assisting in pressure tests and maintenance service on these items, testing fire alarm equipment by actuating transmitting devices as required, and checking equipment provided on any motorized fire apparatus and making the periodic tests and maintenance operations required for it.

(e) Promptly discovering a fire and calling the public fire department (also the fire brigade of the property, where there is such a brigade).

(f) Operating equipment provided for fire control and extinguishment after giving the alarm and before the response of other persons to the alarm.

(g) Monitoring signals due to the operation of protective signaling systems provided, such as alarms from manual fire alarm boxes on a system private to the property, signals for water flow in sprinkler systems, signals from systems for detecting fires and abnormal conditions, including trouble signals.

(h) Making patrols over routes chosen to assure surveillance of all the property at appropriate intervals.

(i) Starting up and shutting down certain equipment when there is no other personnel provided for the purpose.

34. Routes to Be Patrolled. Each route to be covered by a patrolman should be laid out by the responsible manager. The patrolman assigned to each route should be provided with instructions as to all details of the route and what is expected of him in covering it. The route should be laid out so that the patrolman is required to pass through the entire area the patrol is to cover. It should be laid out to prevent shortcuts such as use of stairways, elevators or bridges.

A rest period between rounds is reasonable. Constant walking for more than 40 minutes each hour is likely to result in excessive fatigue and lower the efficiency of the patrolman. Longer patrol routes may be necessary at large properties. Patrol routes of up to an hour are reasonable when alternated with one hour of less fatiguing duty.

35. Rounds. Patrolmen should make rounds at intervals determined by the management for the particular situation. When operations in the property are normally suspended, patrolmen should make rounds hourly unless the management is willing to accept rounds at less frequent intervals. When there are special conditions, such as the presence of exceptional hazards or when protection is impaired, management should institute additional rounds by patrolmen as may be required.

36. First Round of a Patrol. The first round of a patrol should begin as soon as possible after the end of activities of the preceding work shift. During this round the patrolman should have instructions which require him to make a thorough inspection of all buildings or spaces on his routes. His instructions should cover such matters as the following:

(a) Outside doors and gates should be closed and locked; windows, skylights, fire doors and fire shutters should be closed.

(b) All oily waste, rags, paint residue, rubbish, and like items, should be removed from buildings or placed in approved containers.

(c) All fire apparatus should be in place and not obstructed.

(d) Aisles should be clear.

(e) Motors or machines carelessly left running should be shut off and reported.

(f) All offices, conference rooms, and smoking areas should be checked for carelessly discarded smoking materials.

(g) All gas and electric heaters, coal and oil stoves and other heating devices on the premises should be checked.

(h) All hazardous manufacturing processes should be left in a safe condition. The temperature of driers, annealing furnaces, and similar equipment, which continue to operate during the night, and on holidays and weekends, should be noted on all rounds.

(i) Hazardous materials, such as gasoline, rubber cement and other flammable and highly volatile combustibles should be kept in proper containers or removed from buildings.

(j) All sprinkler valves should be open with gages indicating proper pressures. If not open, the fact should be reported immediately.

(k) All rooms should be checked during cold weather to determine if they are heated properly.

(l) All water faucets and air valves found leaking should be closed. If unable to stop leaks, the condition should be reported.

(m) Particular attention should be given to new construction or alterations which may be under way.

The first round of a patrol is very important. Its purpose is to find conditions that might cause a fire or other loss and correct them. The above list of matters for patrolmen's attention on the first round of a patrol contains examples of conditions to be covered in patrolmen's instructions but is not necessarily complete for all plants.

40. SELECTION OF GUARDS

41. Character Investigation. Management should require individuals considered for guard service to satisfactorily pass a character investigation. This investigation should attempt to evaluate the individual's reliability, self-control and potential loyalty to his employer.

42. Police Record. Applicants for a position as a guard should be required to give particulars of any police records and to be fingerprinted. The local police should be furnished this information and be asked to corroborate the information and ask checks by other police agencies of appropriate information. The fingerprint data should be cleared with state, national or international agencies maintaining clearing facilities for police records.

43. Military Record. Applicants for a position as a guard should be required to state any military service record and to submit evidence relating thereto, such as discharge papers, which may assist in evaluation of the individual's suitability for guard service.

44. Contract Service. Contracts for guard service should include a provision that the company furnishing guard service will replace any of its employees who, in the judgment of the company purchasing the service, are not qualified.

45. Evaluation of Intelligence and Temperament. Management should be satisfied that individuals considered for guard service are mentally alert and have good powers of observation, intelligence and judgment. Investigation should attempt to evaluate the individual's personality and temperament.

Such an evaluation is more realistic than arbitrary tests of education or intelligence or an age limit. Very young men may not qualify because they have not acquired a sense of responsibility or judgment. A very old man may have impaired alertness. Individuals should be sought who are not easily confused by an emergency.

46. Annual Examination. Annually, guards should be required to pass a written examination dealing with information about the property protected and procedures for fire loss prevention with which they are expected to be familiar.

47. Physical Examinations. Management should require that individuals considered for guard service pass an examination to determine whether they are physically able to perform the guard duties to which they will be assigned. Guards should also be required to pass an annual physical examination.

The guard does not need to be an athlete, but neither should he have a heart condition or other physical ailment which might work to his disadvantage in moments of stress.

50. TRAINING OF GUARDS

51. General Training Program. Management should establish a continuing training program for its guards. Its scope should be established by the manager or by a fire loss prevention manager, acting for the manager.

Advantage may be taken of courses for guards and fire fighters made available through training programs of vocational agencies, schools, universities and other agencies.

52. Preliminary Training. Management should require guards to have completed at least elementary courses of instruction in the use of portable fire equipment and emergency first aid to injured persons. The time spent in such preliminary training should be not less than two full working days.

For emergency first aid training see the recommendations of the American Red Cross and other bodies offering training courses. The American Red Cross recommends three general stages of training, a basic course, an advanced course and an instructors' course. These courses can be given in as little as 10 hours for the basic and about 16 hours for the advanced. The instructors' courses call for about 15 hours additional to be taken each year. It would be quite practical to require that guards complete the basic course and advance courses by the time they had completed preliminary training and the first period of advanced training, and that they get some of the first aid instructors' training as they complete advance guard training or progress to leadership in the guard force. Effectiveness of first aid training can be furthered by gearing it to the kind of injuries which a guard force in the particular property is most likely to encounter.

53. Advanced Training. During service, a guard should be given not less than the equivalent of two full working days per year of training to increase his knowledge and experience in the use of portable fire extinguishers, first aid to the injured and other training likely to increase his usefulness in guard service work. Guards should be required, as a part of their training, to participate in appropriate meetings of operating personnel devoted to pre-fire planning.

It is seldom practical to have guards also serve as members of a private fire brigade, since fires and emergencies create a demand for guard services at the same time that a force is needed for fire fighting. However, where there is a private fire brigade organization, guards may be required to take some of the same training given members of the brigade. In some properties, membership in the private fire brigade is a distinction much valued by employees. Where this is the case, guards who complete prescribed training and meet other suitable qualifications may be given membership in the brigade as a means of making them better members of the property protection team. See Recommendations for the Organization, Training and Equipment of Private Fire Brigades. NFPA No. 27 — 1975.

54. Knowledge of the Property Protected. The management should allot sufficient time for each guard to familiarize himself with the property protected. He should become thoroughly acquainted with the property, including all buildings and occupancies, doors and fire exits, stairways, elevator shafts, yard areas, entrances and roadways; also, the electrical equipment, how to use switches appropriately so as to control the power and lighting systems when necessary, and how to shut off electric power in an emergency.

55. How to Call Management Personnel. The management should provide instruction on the management personnel to be called in an emergency and require guards to be familiar with the location of telephones for the purpose and numbers to call.

56. How to Call the Fire Department. The management should require guards to know the location of all fire alarm boxes, local or public, and of supplementary telephone facilities, and instruct guards discovering a fire to immediately call the public fire department (and a private fire brigade where one is provided).

57. Knowledge of Fire Protection Equipment. Management should require guards to know the location of portable fire extinguishers, hand hose, standpipes and hydrants, valves controlling sprinkler systems, inside riser valves, post indicator valves and sectional valves in the property's own water system and how to start fire pumps.

Guards may also need to know the location and purpose of valves controlling water other than for fire protection and valves controlling steam, gas and other services.

58. Familiarization with Fire Hazards. Management should require guards to know the locations of dangerous machinery or materials and identify for them hazardous manufacturing processes, especially those continuing during the night, on holidays or week-ends.

60. TRAINING AIDS

61. Meetings. Advantage should be taken of meetings to which guards may be sent for exposure to information useful to them in their work.

Examples are meetings within reasonable travel distance of groups devoted to fire protection, safety and security. Others are sessions of fire department training schools, municipal or regional.

62. Publications. Management should provide, for its own use, publications dealing with fire loss prevention management, so that decisions regarding guard service can be made with good background information. A selection of publications should also be obtained for distribution to persons serving as guards for their information.

Membership in the National Fire Protection Association is recommended as one source of useful periodical publications. See also NFPA Publications List. Issued annually. Free on request.

It is suggested that members of a guard force performing duties for fire loss prevention be provided with the following text and be required to study and be periodically examined on appropriate items of information in it. NFPA Inspection Manual. NFPA No. SPP-11A.

63. Films and Other Training Aids. Motion picture films and other training aids available should be used in guards' training.

Good training aids for specific purposes are available from various sources such as public fire departments, state fire marshals' offices and insurance organizations. Manufacturers of equipment frequently provide good films, brochures and other aids to the understanding of the installation, use and maintenance of equipment which guards must understand.