

FIRE ALARM OR SPRINKLER SYSTEM OUTAGES

The procedure for Assisted Living Facilities to follow when a fire alarm system or fire sprinkler system is out of service for more than 4 hours in a 24-hour period is based on the current Rules of Alabama SBOH, ADPH, Chapters 420-5-4 and 420-5-20 and the 2000 Edition of NFPA 101 (*Life Safety Code*) paragraphs 9-6.18 and 9-7.6, and includes the following:

1. **NOTIFY ADPH ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES DIVISION:** If the situation is discovered during a survey, the facility is in a jeopardy situation until the administration can give the surveyor, or fax to the Department in Montgomery (334-206-5591), a written plan of action stating how and when the fire alarm or sprinkler system is expected to be back in service. If the situation occurs at other times, the facility must report the situation, with the written plan of action, to the ALF Unit.
2. **NOTIFY FACILITY STAFF:** The administrator shall fax to the ALF Unit a copy of a memo which has been given to the facility staff, telling them how to handle a fire situation at the facility (since the automatic fire alarm or sprinkler system does not work). The staff must be instructed to keep smoke and fire doors, including those normally held open with magnets, closed until the fire alarm or sprinkler system has been made operational.
3. **FIRE WATCH APPROVAL:** The *Life Safety Code* requires the evacuation of the facility, or implementation of an approved fire watch. The administrator must implement a fire watch plan which has the written approval of the local Fire Chief or the local Fire Marshal. Fax the ALF Unit the approved fire watch plan. The purpose of a fire watch is to watch for fires which would ordinarily be detected by the fire alarm or sprinkler system.
4. **ACCEPTABLE PLAN:** Once this has been received and approved by the ALF Unit or by the surveyor, the facility is no longer in jeopardy. If the surveyor is on site, she may leave the facility once the fire watch has been implemented.
5. **FIRE WATCH ACTIVITY:** The administrator must use extra individuals who have been brought in to do only the fire watch. These individuals cannot be doing other work, such as housekeeping, resident care, or maintenance work. The fire watch person shall be assigned to do nothing other than walking through the facility, checking all rooms and attic spaces for fires, and signing a log every 15 to 30 minutes.
6. **FIRE WATCH LOG:** The administrator shall fax to the ALF Unit a copy of the sign-in log for the fire watch every 4 to 6 hours, until the problem has been corrected. Night and weekend logs may be faxed during normal Monday – Friday office hours.