



SECTION 24–FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

- 24.1 Fire Alarm System Operation
- 24.2 Fire Alarm System Bypass Permit

Reviewed: Jan. 2024,
April 2020, Nov. 2019, Jan.
2009, Oct. 2008, May 2008,
Sept. 2007, Dec. 2006



24.1 FIRE ALARM SYSTEM OPERATION

A. Objective

To protect the Harper College community and property from fire in the form of alarm/detection systems, building notification systems, and extinguishing systems. This procedure will cover responsibilities for the maintenance and testing of the fire alarm system, as well as the procedure for either bypassing alarms and/or notification if the system is down due to impairments.

B. Scope

This procedure is applicable to the Facilities Management Department or any other department that may require changes or disabling of the fire alarm system and to the Harper College Police Department (HCPD) which monitors the fire alarm system and may put the alarm in bypass per permit.

C. Definitions

Device (point) Bypass – Alarm system is operable, only certain detection devices (points) are temporarily taken offline (turned off). These devices should only be smoke detectors and should never be pull stations. This situation is requested to and implemented by HCPD, from an Employee or Supervisor by completing a 24.2 Fire Alarm Bypass Permit.

Building Bypass – All horns and strobes are in silence and NO activation of devices will be sent to Northwest Central Dispatch (NWCD). This should only be used for the **TESTING** of the fire alarm system. If this level of bypass is used for anything other than testing, permission must be granted by Palatine Fire Prevention Division via request through Environmental Health and Safety (EHS), seven days prior to the permit activation.

Impairment – Fire alarm or sprinkler system is **inoperable**, **NO** signal (alarm or trouble) is sent to HCPD or NWCD and **NO** horns or strobes work to notify occupants of a problem. This situation is due to a breakdown of the system and repairs must be made. There shall be **NO** “Hot Work” (see Section 23 for Hot Work Procedures) performed in the building that is in impairment.

D. Responsibility

There are two College units that have responsibilities in the operation of the fire alarm system:

- Harper College Police Department (HCPD) is responsible for monitoring the fire alarm system. They will also send out notifications to college personnel of fire detection alarms. HCPD will implement requests for the building to be put in bypass via a Bypass Permit. If a building is impaired, HCPD will conduct a Firewatch and inform the necessary Harper personnel and Fire Department.
- Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) is responsible for maintenance and coordinating the inspection and testing of the fire alarm systems and associated recordkeeping. EHS is also responsible for the Fire Systems contract and billing and requesting deficiency repairs to the fire alarm system. The actual testing and inspections are conducted by a licensed fire alarm and sprinkler contractor, with Johnson Controls (JCI). EHS also conducts fire evacuation drills.

E. Procedures

Fire Alarm System Bypass Procedure

The fire alarm system and its components may be required to be put in bypass mode for maintenance/repair, testing, dusty work that cannot be isolated, or hot work. Putting the system in bypass shall be planned and limited to a twelve (12) hour time period. The Supervisor or



Harper College Environmental Health & Safety Procedure Manual

Employee of the Department conducting the work shall complete the Bypass Permit. The bypass permit requestor will determine which devices (points) should be put in bypass, EHS will help determine the devices if needed.

Per the Harper College Police Department; All permits shall be signed off by a Harper Employee who is responsible for the contractor/vendor doing the work. Any contractor/vendor performing work associated with a Bypass permit MUST stop and inform the Police Department Communications section that they are on the premises and commencing work regardless if they are requesting keys. Contractor/ vendors shall also call Police Department Communications to confirm the work has been completed and the system has been returned to normal. Communications is not responsible for verifying work has commenced or stopped nor will they assume it has.

If a permit does not exist either from the vendor or from staff, and no one can be reached, no alarm(s) will be placed in Bypass. No permit, no work. Police communications will not be responsible for contacting a manager to have a permit issued. Vendors/contractors will have to make necessary calls to obtain a permit. If they don't have contact information it will not be provided by Communications and they will not be allowed to work until a permit is secured.

If a permit is issued and work is to be done outside of any of the above Manager's work hours, a contact number must be provided (not an office number) by the issuer of the permit.

The following procedures shall be followed for bypassing any component of the fire alarm system:

- **Testing, Maintenance and/or Repair to the Fire Alarm System**

If any of these operations may trigger a non-intentional activation of the system, the Supervisor shall complete a Bypass Permit. For testing, maintenance, or repairs to an entire building fire alarm system the building bypass may be used.

- **Dusty Work**

The department performing the "dust creating" work shall take measures to control dust, fumes, vapors, etc. The following steps for isolation should be considered before requesting a Bypass Permit:

- Implement engineering controls to limit dust/fumes/vapors, etc. by installing plastic around work area, ventilate work area and/or using wet methods to limit dust creation.
- The department may cover smoke detectors near the work being performed by detector covers-preferred, or a paper bag. The supervisor must ensure these are removed at the end of the work.

If work is being done creating dust/fumes, etc. that cannot be controlled by any of the above isolation controls, a Device/Point Bypass Permit may be requested by the Supervisor or employee conducting the work.

- **Hot Work**

Operations involving cutting or welding are referred to as Hot Work. All safety procedures for Hot Work Operations are outlined in the Environmental Health and Safety Procedure Manual, Section 23. Hot Work is **not** allowed in buildings where there is a fire alarm or sprinkler system impairment.



24.2 FIRE ALARM SYSTEM BY-PASS PERMIT

REV. 4/20

FIRE ALARM SYSTEM BYPASS PERMIT “Bypass Permit”		
This Fire Alarm System Bypass Permit is required for any work performed inside a building where operations may trigger the alarm for a non-fire event or for service to the fire alarm system. This Bypass Permit only temporarily bypasses (de-activates) <u>the selected detection devices</u>, all other detection systems are in operation.		
Work being done by: ☐ Employee Name: _____ Dept. _____ ☐ Contractor Name: _____ Phone # _____ (The Permit must be signed below by the Harper employee that has hired or is working with a Contractor. Contractors may not complete the permit. Contractors should bring a signed Permit to Harper Police prior to beginning work.)		
Work in Building and Room/Area: _____		
Reason for Bypass: ☐ TESTING (Building Bypass) ☐ Fire Alarm or ☐ Sprinklers ☐ Other _____ ☐ Device/Point Bypass: _____ MAINTENANCE / REPAIR Describe: _____ ☐ DUSTY WORK <i>(isolation controls must be attempted first)</i> _____ ☐ HOTWORK <i>(also see Hot work requirements and permit in Section 23)</i> _____ ☐ Other (describe): _____		
The following detection devices/points or entire building are to be put in bypass: <i>(list room number and type of detector and/or number of detectors, ex: A101 – 2 smoke detectors. Or attach system screen shot with points highlighted)</i> 		
Print Name: (Supervisor/Employee of Department Conducting Work or has hired Contractor):		Sign (original signature):
Date:	Time Permit Begins:	Time Work is expected to end <i>(max. 12 hours)</i>:
Section to be completed by Harper College Police Dept. (HCPD)		
Time System put back:	HCPD Call for Service #	
HCPD will automatically reset the Fire Alarm system after this Permit has expired (8.5 hours max.) If additional time is needed another Permit must be completed. Permit is to be posted in HCPD near Fire Alarm Panel.		