

Chapter 3

ALARM SYSTEMS*

*Cross reference—Fire prevention and protection, Ch. 8.

State law references—Municipal authority to regulate automated alarm systems, G.S. § 7-148(c)(7)(H)(xiv); automatic telephone alarms, G.S. § 7-2826.

Sec. 3-1. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Alarm system means an assembly of equipment and devices arranged to signal the presence of a hazard requiring urgent attention and to which police or fire department personnel are expected to respond. This includes all burglar alarms, fire alarms, holdup and medical alarms and automatic telephone dialer alarms.

Alarm user means any person who owns, leases or operates any alarm system used to activate the town's emergency response system or personnel.

Automatic telephone dialing device means an alarm system which automatically sends over regular telephone lines, by direct connection or otherwise, a prerecorded voice message or coded signal indicating the existence of the emergency situation that the alarm is designed to detect.

False alarm means the activation of an alarm system through mechanical failure, malfunction, improper installation or the negligence of the owner or lessee of an alarm system or of his employees or agents. Such terminology does not include, for example, an actual emergency situation or an act of God (i.e., storms). Excluded from this definition are false alarms that are transmitted with criminal, malicious or mischievous intent. Such violations will be prosecuted under the applicable General Statutes.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, § III)

Cross reference—Definitions and rules of construction generally, § 1-2.

Sec. 3-2. Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide uniform standards of control and regulations for the installation, use and maintenance of burglary, holdup, medical and/or fire alarm systems within the town; to provide penalties for noncompliance; and to encourage the installation of protective alarm systems in all dwellings and commercial structures, while minimizing the burden on the town's emergency responders for false alarms.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, § I; Ord. of 11-22-10)

Sec. 3-3. Scope.

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to any person who operates, maintains or owns any alarm system, whether locally controlled or remotely monitored, used to summon police, ambulance, fire or other emergency vehicles and/or personnel in response to an alarm signal.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, § II)

Sec. 3-4. Registration.

(a) Any person installing an alarm system within the town shall register with the town at least ten (10) days prior to the date of anticipated installation. All existing alarm systems shall be registered with the town. To the extent permitted by law, the information furnished and secured shall be confidential in nature and shall not be subject to public disclosure or inspection and shall be kept so that the contents thereof shall remain of a confidential nature with the exception of those persons charged with the administration of this chapter.

(b) Initial registration of alarm systems shall be accomplished by filling out a form provided by the town. Reregistration shall be required every year by July 31, at no charge, to ensure up-to-date information is provided about the alarm system.

(c) The initial fee for registration shall be twenty-five dollars (\$25.00), and shall be a one-time charge. Any town-owned buildings shall be exempt from the registration fee.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, §§ IV(1), V1(IH3); Ord. of 11-22-10)

Sec. 3-5. Installation specifications.

No alarm system shall be installed by other than a licensed person or other person meeting the requirements as set forth in the building and electrical codes of the state. No alarm system shall be installed unless an electrical permit to install an alarm system has been obtained from the town building official as is required by the building and electrical codes of the state.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, § IV(2))

Sec. 3-6. Automatic telephone dialing systems.

No person shall install an automatic telephone dialing system within the town the termination point of which is the department of police services.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, § IV(3), (4); Ord. of 11-22-10)

Sec. 3-7. Duration of audible signals.

All alarm systems which transmit an audible signal which may be heard outside of the protected premises shall be equipped with a device limiting the duration of such audible signal to not more than thirty (30) minutes in accordance with G.S. §§ 22a-67 through 22a-69.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, § IV(5))

Sec. 3-8. Suspension, revocation of privileges.

The chief of police may revoke the privilege of having equipment and indicators in the communication center of police headquarters if the owner or lessee and/or alarm equipment supplier fails to comply with any requirements of this chapter where alarm systems actuates excessive false alarms and thereby constitutes a public nuisance. The police department may require removal of the equipment within seven (7) days from receipt of written notice exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays and holidays at the expense of the owner or lessee and/or alarm equipment suppliers. Failure to remove the equipment and indicators as specified shall result in the town doing so at the expense of the person so notified.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, § V)

Sec. 3-9. False alarms; assessment of user fee.

(a) A maximum of three (3) false alarms per calendar year shall be allowed from any alarm system of any person that has fulfilled the registration/reregistration requirements in section 3-4. Upon receipt of the second false alarm, the alarm user shall be notified in writing or by electronic notification by the chief of police that the alarm user's system should be inspected and repaired if necessary.

(b) Upon receipt of a fourth false alarm and for each false alarm thereafter during the calendar year from any alarm system of any person that has fulfilled the registration/reregistration requirements in section 3-4, a user fee shall be assessed by the town in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

(c) One (1) false alarm per calendar year shall be allowed from any alarm system of any person that has not fulfilled the registration/reregistration requirements in section 3-4.

(d) Upon receipt of the second false alarm and for each false alarm thereafter during the calendar year from any alarm system of any person that has not fulfilled the registration/reregistration requirements in section 3-4, a user fee shall be assessed by the town in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

(e) Alarms originating from any building owned or operated by the town shall be exempt from the user fee requirement.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, § VI(4)-(6); Ord. of 11-22-10)

Sec. 3-10. Investigation of evidence of false alarms.

In determining whether an alarm is a false alarm, all circumstances shall be considered. Setting off an alarm may cause a person who was attempting a break-in to flee. In investigating whether an alarm is false, a careful check will be made for signs of break-in attempts.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, § VIII(2))

Sec. 3-11. Penalties.

(a) Any person who fails to pay a registration fee and/or user fee within ninety (90) days of assessment as provided in this chapter shall be fined fifty dollars (\$50.00). Each delinquent registration fee and/or user fee shall be a separate offense.

(b) Any person found to be in violation of any other provision of this chapter shall be fined fifty dollars (\$50.00).

(c) All monies received pertaining to the alarm system ordinance shall be directed to the general fund of the town.

(Ord. of 8-1-88, § VII; Ord. of 11-22-10)

Sec. 3-12. Appeals.

(a) There shall be an alarm appeals board which shall have the responsibility of hearing appeals concerning any action taken pursuant to this chapter.

(b) The alarm appeals board shall consist of the existing membership of the board of police commissioners. Three (3) members of the board shall constitute a quorum. All decisions shall be by a majority vote of those present and voting.

(c) Any person aggrieved by any fine, penalty or other action taken pursuant to this chapter may appeal to the alarm appeals board by filing a written request with the chief of police at the police station within thirty (30) days of the fine, penalty or other action complained of. The alarm appeals board shall hear the appeal within thirty (30) days. The appellant shall be given notice in writing at least five (5) days prior to such hearing.
(Ord. of 8-1-88, § IX)