

Chapter 67

ALARM SYSTEMS

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[HISTORY: Adopted by the Borough Council of the Borough of Camp Hill 7-10-1991 by Ord. No. 913, approved 7-10-1991. Amendments noted where applicable.]

GENERAL REFERENCES

Smoke and heat detectors — See Ch. 113, Art. II.

§ 67-1. Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to impose administrative sanctions in order to reduce the numerous false alarms originating from homes, businesses and other establishments located within the Borough of Camp Hill.

§ 67-2. Title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "False Alarm Ordinance."

§ 67-3. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following words, terms and phrases shall have the meanings herein ascribed thereto unless the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

ALARM SUPPLIER — The business by any individual, partnership, corporation or other entity of selling, leasing, maintaining, servicing, repairing, altering, replacing, moving or installing any alarm system or causing any alarm system to be sold, leased, maintained, serviced, repaired, altered, replaced, moved or installed in or on any building, structure or facility.

ALARM SYSTEM — Any assembly of equipment, mechanical, electrical or battery-operated, arranged to signal the occurrence of a police, fire, hazard or medical emergency requiring urgent attention and to which police, fire and emergency medical units are expected to respond.

ANSWERING SERVICE — A service whereby trained employees, in attendance at all times, receive prerecorded voice messages from automatic dialing devices reporting an emergency at a stated location, where such employees have the duty to relay immediately by live voice any

such emergency message over a trunk line to the communications center of the police, fire or emergency medical services.

AUDIBLE ALARM — Any device, bell, horn or siren which is attached to the interior or exterior of a building, structure or facility and emits a warning signal audible outside the building, structure or facility and is designed to attract attention when activated by a criminal act or other emergency requiring Police or Fire Department response.

AUTOMATIC DIALING DEVICE — A device which is interconnected to a telephone line and is programmed to transmit a signal by a voice or coded message that indicates that an emergency condition exists and the need for an emergency response is required.

BOROUGH — The Borough of Camp Hill.

CENTRAL STATION — A protective system or group of such systems operated privately for customers by a person, firm or corporation which accepts recorded messages from automatic dialing devices at a central station having operators and guards in attendance at all times who have the duty to take appropriate action upon the receipt of a signal or message, including the relaying of messages to the Communications Center of the Police and Fire Departments.

EMERGENCY — A police, fire, hazard or medical emergency.

FALSE ALARM —

- A. An alarm activated in the absence of an emergency, whether willfully or by inadvertence, negligence or unintentional act, including the malfunction of the alarm system, to which the police, fire or emergency medical services responds. It excludes alarms caused by malfunctions of the Police and Fire Communications Center receiving equipment if such alarm is directly connected to the alarm board; testing or repairing of telephone or electrical lines or equipment outside the premises; acts of God, such as earthquake, flood, windstorm, thunder or lightning; an attempted illegal entry of which there is visible evidence; a crime in progress; or, in the case of an emergency medical alarm, an actual medical emergency requiring police, fire and/or medical personnel. If doubt exists as to the cause of the "false alarm," the Chief of Police or his designee shall make a decision regarding the circumstances of the activation.
- B. Multiple alarms received by the Police Department or Fire Department before the system can be deactivated within a reasonable period of time shall be considered a single alarm.
- C. It also includes the intentional activation of a holdup alarm for other than a holdup in progress, the intentional activation of a burglary alarm for other than a burglary, the intentional activation of a medical alarm for other than a medical emergency or the intentional activation of a fire alarm for other than a fire or hazard.

FIRE DEPARTMENT — All members and equipment of the Borough of Camp Hill Volunteer Fire Department.

FIRE EMERGENCY — A fire.

HAZARD EMERGENCY — An explosion or leak of toxic gas, liquid or solid, or a potential explosion or leak.

INTERMEDIARY — A central station protective system or an answering service.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY — An emergency involving the health of a person or persons.

PERSON — Any person, group, firm, partnership, association, company, corporation or organization of any kind.

POLICE AND FIRE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER — The police and fire communications rooms and other rooms which house communications equipment and police and/or fire radio dispatchers, and the Cumberland County Communications Center.

POLICE DEPARTMENT — All members of the Borough of Camp Hill Police Department.

POLICE EMERGENCY — An incident requiring prompt response by the Police Department.

§ 67-4. Required information.

- A. Within 30 days from the effective date of this chapter, every alarm owner/user who has installed an alarm system in the Borough shall furnish to Police and Fire Communications Center and the Chief of Police the following information:
- (1) The name, home and business address and home and business telephone number of the owner(s) or user(s) of the alarm system and also the name(s), address(es) and telephone number(s) of the home(s) and business(es) of the property(ies) where the device(s) is/are installed.
 - (2) The name(s), home(s) and business(es) address(es) and the name(s), address(es) and telephone number(s) of the home(s) and business(es) of at least two persons who are authorized to gain access to the premises where the device is installed.
 - (3) The name(s), home(s) and business address(es) and home and business telephone number of any other person, if any, other than the alarm supplier, who is responsible for maintenance and repair of the system.
 - (4) A general written description of the alarm system, other than schematics.
- B. All information furnished pursuant to this section shall be kept confidential and shall be for the authorized use of the Camp Hill Police Department only.

§ 67-5. Notification prior to testing.

No person shall conduct any test or demonstration of any alarm system without first notifying the shift supervisor of the Borough Police or Fire Departments and/or the Cumberland County Communications Center.

§ 67-6. Reporting of false alarms.

- A. Any police officer or fireman responding to an alarm which is determined to be false shall promptly notify the Chief of Police of such alarm in writing, and the Chief of Police shall, within five days, have notification of such false alarm sent via United States mail to the person in whose name the alarm is registered as the alarm owner or user.
- B. Any alarm system which has three or more false alarms within a calendar year shall be in violation and the alarm owner/user subject to fine. Notwithstanding the above, such penalties shall not be imposed during the first ninety-day period after installation of the alarms which are subject to this chapter.

§ 67-7. Fines for false alarms.

- A. For the purpose of defraying the costs to the Police and Fire Departments of responding to false alarms, the owner, lessee or user of any alarm system, person using the service of any kind of alarm system intermediary or any other kind of direct or indirect connection with the Police or Fire Communications Center, except a person using the two-way live voice communication by telephone, shall, as a condition to installation and continued operation of such equipment or service, execute a consent in such form as may be prescribed by the Chief of Police or his designee that such owner, lessee or user shall pay the Borough for all false alarms originating from the premises of said owner, lessee or user, as follows:
 - (1) First three false alarms, per calendar year: written warning.
 - (2) Fourth false alarm and each false alarm thereafter per calendar year:
 - (a) Commercial installation: \$100 each.
 - (b) Residential installation: \$50 each.
- B. Notwithstanding the above, such penalties shall not be imposed during the first ninety-day period after installation of the alarms which are subject to this chapter.
- C. Any such owner, lessee or user who fails to execute the consent described in § 67-4 within 30 days from the effective date of this chapter shall be in violation of this chapter.
- D. Any owner, lessee or user of an alarm system may revoke or refuse to consent as set forth in § 67-4 above only by disconnecting the alarm system. With respect to any such system installed at the effective date of this chapter, the owner, lessee or user can refuse or revoke the aforesaid consent by disconnecting such alarm system within 30 days from the effective date of this chapter.
- E. Penalties provided for false alarms that are relayed or transmitted by an intermediary shall be the responsibility of the owner or user of the alarm system.

§ 67-8. Violations and penalties.

- A. Violation of any provision of this chapter shall constitute a summary offense punishable by a fine as prescribed in § 67-7A for each offense and cost of prosecution and, in default of payment of such fines and costs, imprisonment for a period not exceeding 30 days. Such fine and costs shall be collectible before any District Justice as like fines and penalties are now by law collectible.
- B. Any person found guilty of willful misuse or false activation of an alarm system or failure to comply with § 67-4, Required information, shall be liable for a fine not to exceed three \$300 and the cost of prosecution and, in default of payment of such fine and cost, imprisonment for a period not exceeding 30 days.

