

CHAPTER 16. ALARM DEVICES AND FALSE ALARMS

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16-1. Purposes:

The purpose of this chapter is to alleviate conditions which lead to an unnecessary drain on the manpower, time, space, facilities and finances of the Town of Hackettstown to the police and fire departments and deterioration of the quality of services to persons subscribing to alarm services. All alarms sent to the Town must be by dial alarm. An annunciator control panel shall not be provided by the Town.

16-2. Scope:

The provisions of this Chapter shall apply to any person, other than the Town, who operates, maintains or owns any alarm device designed to summon police, fire department or other municipal agency to any location in response to any type of alarm signal. Excluded from the provisions of this Chapter are interior sound, battery operated smoke alarms. The terms of this Chapter shall in no way prohibit alarm companies from providing services by private source to other offices within or without the Town so long as such activity is not connected to the alarm panel or telephone at the police headquarters.

16-3. Definitions.

(a) Annunciator Control Panel. That component installed in the console in police headquarters containing alarm indications and designations.

(b) Alarm System. The installment in one or more buildings of one or more alarm devices for the express purpose of giving visual or audible warning, or both, of an emergency such as burglary, intrusion, fire, smoke, flood or like perils.

(c) Alarm Device. Any type of alarm, actuating equipment, which provides warning of intrusion, fire, smoke, burglary, flood or like peril.

(d) False Alarm. The activation of an alarm system by causes other than those to which the alarm system was designed or intended to respond.

(e) Dial Alarm. An alarm device that employs an automatic dialing system with an automatic cutoff, precoded to connect with a telephone in police headquarters rather than to the control panel.

(f) Local Alarms. Any mechanism that constitutes, in whole or in part, an alarm system that may or may not be designed to activate the annunciator control panel in police headquarters or at

a private company at a location other than the property of the Town of Hackettstown. Local alarms also include any alarm device or alarm system that provides warning signals only at the property location.

16-4. Operation and Maintenance of Alarms.

(a) All components of alarm systems, alarm devices, dial alarms, and local alarms shall be maintained by the owners or users thereof in good repair. When evidence exists that there has been a failure by such owner or users to properly maintain the alarm devices, the police chief is authorized to demand that such devices be disconnected until such time as appropriate repairs and/or modifications are made.

(b) All local alarms shall be equipped with a time relay or battery to limit the sounding of alarms to thirty (30) minutes or less.

(c) All local alarms shall be registered with the Hackettstown Police Department. A local alarm shall be deemed registered when the occupant of the building in which it is installed shall have filed with the Hackettstown Police Department a registration form which shall include, among other data, the location of the device, the installer of the device, the type of device, provisions relating to false alarms and testing procedures, a list of the names and telephone numbers of the persons to be contacted in the event of alarm, the names of the persons or company maintaining the alarm system and any other information as may be required by the Hackettstown Police Department.

(d) No person shall maintain or operate any alarm except in conformance with this Chapter.

16-5. Dial Alarms; Fees.

(a) No dial alarm shall be permitted unless:

1. It shall first have been approved by the Chief of Police after proof has been submitted that said dial alarm has been approved by the Federal Communications Commission and the performance of a test alarm conducted by the applicant.

2. It shall first have been registered with the Police Department as hereinafter required.

3. The applicant consents to the inspection of the premises where the alarm is located during working hours or other mutually agreeable times.

4. The applicant maintains at Police Headquarters the names, telephone number and address of a relative, neighbor or other third party who can be contacted by the Police Department in case of an alarm.

(b) All dial alarms shall be coded to dial a special number of Hackettstown Police Headquarters when designated or provided by the Chief of Police.

(c) All dial alarms shall be capable of being disconnected by the owner or his designee to permit a call to the Police Department in the event that a false alarm occurs.

(d) The owner of each dial alarm system shall pay to the Town of Hackettstown an annual fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) to cover the cost of registration and testing and to amortize the cost of the special telephone line or lines which may be required in Police Headquarters, along with ancillary tape devices necessitated by these systems and additional records that should be maintained.

(e) The owner of dial alarms shall be governed by the false alarm procedures and penalties set forth in this Chapter.

(f) If any person has a dial alarm in existence at the time of the passage of this chapter, he shall have sixty (60) days in which to program the equipment to comply with the terms of this Chapter.

(g) No dial alarm shall dial a telephone number other than the number designated for dial alarms as specified by the Chief of Police.

(h) The taped contents of any recorded message from a dial alarm must be intelligible and in a format approved by the Chief of Police. No such message shall be transmitted more than three (3) times to the Police Department as a result of a single stimulus of the mechanism,

(i) The sensory mechanism of dial alarms shall be adjusted so as to suppress false indications and not to be actuated by impulses due to, among other things, pressure changes in water pipes, short flashes of light, wind, noises, rattling or vibration of doors or windows or other forces unrelated to general alarms.

(j) All components of dial alarms shall be maintained by the owner or his designee in good repair. When evidence exists that there has been failure to comply with the operation requirements of this Chapter, the chief of Police is then authorized to demand that such device be disconnected until

such time as compliance with such requirements is reestablished, and any person violating the operation or registration requirements of this Chapter shall be subject to the penalties set forth herein.

(k) A dial alarm must provide an automatic line seizure feature in the event this line is busy with an incoming or outgoing call.

16-6. Deleted.

16-7. Deleted.

16-8. False Alarms.

(a) Investigations. In the case of false alarms which summon the police or fire department to investigate, the Police Chief shall cause an investigation to be made and shall keep a record of such false alarms on file.

(b) Penalties for False Alarms: In any calendar year period of the following penalties shall apply:

1. For the first false alarm a written warning shall be issued.
2. For the second or third false alarm a fine of \$35.00 shall be imposed for each such false alarm.
3. For the fourth, fifth or sixth false alarm a fine of \$100.00 shall be imposed for each such false alarm.
4. For the seventh, eighth, ninth or tenth false alarm a fine of \$150.00 shall be imposed for each such false alarm.
5. For the eleventh through the twentieth false alarm a fine of \$250.00 shall be imposed for each such violation.
6. For any violation in excess of the twentieth a fine of \$500.00 shall be imposed for each such violation.

(c) Penalties for Intentional False Alarms. Any individual intentionally, willfully, or maliciously destroying or injuring any of the posts, alarm boxes or other alarm apparatus owned by the Town of Hackettstown or intentionally, willfully or maliciously interfering with the operation of same or any part thereof or who hinders or impedes any of the operations intended to be accomplished thereby or who intentionally causes or assists in causing a false alarm or fire or other emergency to be given in any manner shall, upon conviction thereof, be imprisoned in the County Jail for a term not

exceeding ninety (90) days or shall forfeit and pay a fine not less than \$500.00 and not more than \$1,000.00.

16-9. Violations and Penalties.

(a) Any person convicted of a violation of this Chapter, shall, in addition to the revocation of the license or permit of any person, or any person found guilty of failure to comply with any rules or regulations duly promulgated pursuant thereto, such person may, after being found guilty of such violation, to be subject to a fine of not more than \$1,000.00.

(b) Said maximum fine of \$1,000.00 shall not apply in those instances in which the amount of the maximum penalty has hereinbefore been limited to a lesser amount by this Chapter. In the case of a continuing violation, the violator may be found guilty of as many separate offenses or counts as the number of days as he is proved to have continued in violation of this Chapter.