

**AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A POLICY FOR  
SECURITY ALARMS IN THE TOWN OF SPRING HILL  
FOR THE PURPOSE OF REGULATING THE INSTALLATION  
AND MAINTENANCE OF SECURITY ALARMS BY  
PRIVATE OWNERS OF PROPERTY AND THE CONCURRENT  
ACTIVITY OF THE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS  
RELATING TO PRIVATE SECURITY ALARMS**

**Whereas**, the transmission of automatic alarm systems to the Police and Fire Departments in the Town of Spring Hill has at times impaired the ability of the Police and/or Fire Department to respond to true emergencies;

**Whereas**, the continued and unnecessarily prolonged emission of sound from audible alarm systems and the difficulties and delays encountered in silencing such systems have disturbed the residents and businesses of the Town and have caused problems for Police and/or Fire Department personnel;

**Whereas**, it is deemed necessary to establish controls on various types of alarm systems and other emergency signals from police and/or fire alarm devices which require Police Department response, investigation, or safeguarding of property at the location of an event reported by signal transmitted by an alarm device; and

**Whereas**, it is the purpose and intent of this ordinance to improve the effectiveness of police and fire equipment and personnel for handling of emergency situations, and to reduce the number of false alarms.

**BE IT THEREFORE ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE TOWN OF SPRING HILL, TENNESSEE** that a new chapter is hereby added to Title 13 of the Spring Hill Municipal Code, said chapter to be designated as Chapter 4 and to be in words and figures as follows:

**ALARM SYSTEMS**

**SECTION**

- 13-401. Definitions.
- 13-402. Automatic Telephone Dialing Alarm Systems.
- 13-403. Permit Issuance.
- 13-404. Application Requirements for an Alarm Permit.
- 13-405. Items Required for an Alarm System to Qualify for an Alarm Permit.
- 13-406. False Alarms.
- 13-407. Fee Assessment.

- 13-408. Disconnection.
- 13-409. Penalty for Offenses.

**13-401. Definitions.**

Unless it is apparent from the context that another meaning is intended, the following words when used in this chapter shall have the following meanings:

- (1) “Alarm system” means any assembly of equipment, mechanical or electrical, arranged to signal the Police Department and/or Fire Department that an emergency exists and the Department is needed. “Alarm system” shall also mean any alarm device which automatically emits audible, visual, or other response upon the occurrence of any hazard or emergency and is intended to alert persons outside the building to the existence of said hazard or emergency.
- (2) “Alarm user” means the person, firm partnership, association, corporation, company, or organization of any kind in control of any building, structure, or facility or portion thereof wherein an alarm system is maintained.
- (3) “Alarm business” means the business of any individual, partnership, corporation, or other entity engaged in selling, leasing, maintaining, servicing, repairing, altering, replacing, moving, or installing any alarm system or in causing any alarm system to be sold, leased, maintained, serviced, repaired, altered, replaced, moved, or installed in or on any building, structure, or facility.
- (4) “Automatic telephone dialing alarm system” means any alarm system which is a device which automatically or electronically transmits by telephone or telephone line connected to a dispatch facility a recorded message or code signal indicating a need for emergency response; or, a system which, upon activation, connects to an answering service for transmission to the Police Department of a need for emergency response.
- (5) “False alarm” means an alarm signal eliciting a response by the Police Department when a situation requiring a response by the Police Department does not in fact exist; but, this definition does not include an alarm signal caused by unusually violent conditions of nature nor does it include other extraordinary circumstances not reasonably subject to control by the alarm user.
- (6) “Dispatch facility” means a communications center designated to receive, route, and otherwise handle all incoming police emergency service communications traffic.
- (7) “Answering service” refers to a telephone answering service providing among its services on a continuous basis emergency signals from alarm systems and thereafter relaying the message to a dispatch facility or notifying the Police Department.

**13-402. Automatic Telephone Dialing Alarm Systems.**

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person, natural or corporate, to sell, offer for sale, install, maintain, lease, operate, or assist in the operation of an automatic telephone dialing alarm system over any Town telephone lines exclusively used by the public to directly request emergency service from the Police Department.

(2) The Police Department, when it has knowledge of the unlawful maintenance of an automatic telephone dialing alarm system installed or operating in violation of this chapter shall, in writing, order the owner, operator, or lessee to disconnect and cease operation of the system within seventy-two (72) hours of receipt of the order.

**13-403. Permit Issuance.**

(1) The Police Department is hereby authorized to grant a revocable alarm users permit to any alarm user located in the Town to operate, maintain, install, or modify a police or fire alarm device, and no such device shall be operated unless such a permit has first been issued.

(2) A permit issued pursuant to this ordinance may be revoked at any time by the Police Department upon the giving of ten (10) days notice in writing by certified or registered mail to the permit holder, sent to the address shown on the permit. Violation of this chapter, following conviction thereof, shall constitute grounds for revocation of the permit. The failure of the Police Department to revoke the permit following the finding of the City Court that there has been a violation of this chapter shall not be deemed a waiver of the right to revoke the permit.

(3) A fee of \$20.00 shall be charged for issuance of any such permit. Each permit will be renewed by December 31, with a \$10.00 renewal fee assessed annually.

**13-404. Application Requirements for an Alarm Permit.**

Application for an alarm permit shall be made on forms provided by the Police Department, and shall be accompanied by the fee as set forth in Section 13-403(3). The application form shall request the following information:

1. Make and type of alarm system.
2. The name, address, and telephone number of the applicant's property to be serviced by the alarm, and the name, address, and telephone number of applicant's residence if different. If the applicant's alarm is serviced by an alarm company, then the applicant shall also include the name, address, and telephone number of that company including the name, address, and telephone number of any alarm- monitoring service if different from the alarm company.

3. An emergency telephone number of the user or his representative to permit prompt notification of alarm calls and to assist police personnel in the inspection of the property.

4. It is the applicant's responsibility to immediately notify the Police Department in writing of any and all changes in the information on file with the Town regarding such permit. Failure to do so shall constitute grounds for revocation of the permit.

5. The approximate time required for applicant or designated responsible keyholder to respond to the scene of an alarm activation.

6. The issuance and renewal fees set forth in Section 13-403(3).

**13-405. Items Required for an Alarm System to Qualify for an Alarm Permit.**

(1) All alarm systems shall have a backup power supply that will become effective in the event of power failure or outage in the source of electricity.

(2) All alarm systems will have an automatic reset which silence the annunciator within thirty (30) minutes after activation and will be the responsibility of permittee to see that continued activation by the same event does not occur in a eight (8) hour time frame.

(3) Any system installed on or after the effective date of this chapter must comply with the requirements stipulated in this section. Pre-existing installations must comply with this section within six (6) months of the effective date of this chapter.

(4) Any alarm system user must respond or have a designated representative to respond to the scene of any alarm activation to assist police or fire personnel in inspection of the building, structure, or facility.

(5) After notification by the Police Department or Fire Department of an alarm activation, any alarm user who fails to respond or have a designated representative respond to the scene of such alarm activation will be subject to a fine of not less than \$25.00. Failure to respond to more than three (3) alarms in a permit year will be grounds for revocation of the alarm permit.

**13-406. False Alarms.**

(1) Whenever an alarm is activated in the Town thereby requiring an emergency response to the location by police or fire personnel, an officer on the scene of the activated alarm shall determine whether the emergency response was in fact required as indicated by the alarm system or whether in some way the alarm system malfunctioned and thereby activated a false alarm.

(2) If the officer at the scene of the activated alarm system determines the alarm to be a true false alarm and not an accidental or emergency alarm, then the officer on the scene will advise the alarm user or representative the system needs to be checked. More than one false alarm in a thirty (30) day period will result in a written notification to the permit holder. The permit holder upon receipt of the notification shall be entitled to an hearing before the City Administrator or his designee. The permit holder desiring a hearing shall request said hearing within ten (10) days of date of notification.

(3) The Police Department shall have the right to inspect any alarm system on the premises to which response has been made and may cause an inspection of such system to be made at any reasonable time thereafter to determine whether it is being used in conformity with the terms of this chapter.

(4) It shall be a violation of this chapter to intentionally cause a false alarm, and any person who intentionally causes a false alarm shall be subjected to the penalty provisions hereof.

(5) There shall be provided to the alarm user a ten (10) day grace period during the initial installation of the alarm system. The ten (10) days shall commence to run upon the issuance of the alarm permit by the Police Department.

(6) Any alarm business testing or servicing any alarm system shall notify the Police Department and/or Fire Department and shall instruct said department of the location and time of said testing and servicing. This shall apply to any testing period after the initial installation period has ceased.

(7) If the Police Department denies the issuance or renewal of a permit, or revokes a permit, it shall send written notice of its action and a statement of the right to appeal to the City Administrator or Board of Mayor and Aldermen, by certified mail, return receipt requested, to both the applicant or permit holder and the applicable alarm-installing service company.

**13-407. Fee Assessment.**

(1) Within a permit year, a service charge shall be automatically levied against the alarm user of \$25.00 upon the occurrence of the seventh (7th) false alarm, a like amount for the eighth (8th) false alarm, and a service charge of \$25.00 for the ninth (9th) and additional false alarms. All service charges levied shall be paid to the Town by the alarm user within thirty (30) days of the date of the written notice of said charges. Failure to make payment within thirty (30) days from date of notice shall result in the revocation of the alarm permit and the alarm owner shall be cited into Spring Hill City Court. Continued alarms from a revoked permit site may result in the ordered disconnection of the alarm system.

(2) The ninth (9th) false alarm, and any subsequent false alarms, within a permit year shall result in revocation of the alarm user's permit in the following manner:

A. The alarm user shall be given ten (10) days' advance written notification that the alarm user's permit will be revoked, which written notice shall set forth the reason for such revocation.

B. Reinstatement of the permit and Police Department services may occur upon receipt of a letter from an alarm company that the alarm system is operating poorly, and upon inspection and approval by the Police Department, and receipt of a \$100.00 reinstatement fee.

**13-408. Disconnection.**

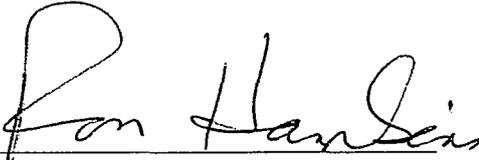
In the event that an alarm system emitting an audible, visual, or other similar response shall fail to be deactivated within the time limitations specified in the previous section hereof, the Town shall have the right to take such action as may be necessary in order to disconnect any such alarm.

**13-409. Penalty for Offenses.**

Any person who violates any provision of this chapter shall be guilty of a violation, and upon conviction in City Court, shall be subject to a fine of \$25.00, plus any court costs. Each occurrence constitutes a separate offense.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED THAT THIS ORDINANCE REPEALS AND TAKES THE PLACE OF ORDINANCE NO. 96-14.**

Passed and adopted by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen of the Town of Spring Hill, Tennessee on the 17th day of February, 1997.

  
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RON HANKINS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

  
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JUNE QUIRK, RECORDER

LEGAL FORM APPROVED:

  
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N. HOUSTON PARKS, ATTORNEY

PASSED ON 1ST READING: 1/20/97

PASSED ON 2ND READING: 2/17/97

CAPTION PUBLISHED: 3-28-97