

Chapter 90

ALARMS

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[HISTORY: Adopted by the Borough Council of the Borough of New Hope 3-23-1987 by Ord. No. 247 (Ch. 13, Part 1 of the 1990 Code). Amendments noted where applicable.]

GENERAL REFERENCES

Fee Schedule — See Ch. A280.

§ 90-1. Title.

This chapter shall be known as the "Emergency Alarm Control Ordinance."

§ 90-2. Policy.

The purpose of this chapter is to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the inhabitants of the Borough by discouraging false alarms reported to the Police Department, fire companies and similar emergency services; and by controlling and regulating automatic alarm systems and installations thereof.

§ 90-3. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

ALARM BUSINESS — Any business operated by a person, partnership, corporation, or other business entity for profit which engages in the activity of altering, installing, leasing, maintaining, repairing, replacing, selling, servicing, monitoring, or responding to burglary, holdup, fire, medical emergency, or similar emergency alarm systems, or which causes these activities to take place.

AUTOMATIC ALARM DEVICE (hereinafter referred to as AADs) — Any electronic or mechanical device which upon receipt or detection of a stimulus or signal characteristic of a fire, intrusion, or other emergency situation, automatically transmits a prerecorded voice or other alarm signal over telephone lines by direct or indirect connection; or which causes a visual or audible signal to be generated which can be detected from outside the premises in which it is installed and which is intended to result in the summoning of an emergency

service agency. Indirect connection includes answering services and all other persons monitoring and relaying information to an emergency service agency.

EMERGENCY SERVICE AGENCY — The New Hope Borough Police Department, volunteer fire companies operating within New Hope Borough, rescue squads, ambulance companies, and any other similar service or agency.

FALSE ALARM — Any signal activated by an AAD, or any other kind of direct or indirect signal given or caused to be given to an emergency service agency to which emergency service agency personnel respond and which is not the result of a burglary, fire, injury, robbery, or similar emergency. For the purpose of this chapter, any alarm transmitted or activated by an AAD without physical sign of entry, fire, or other emergency shall be considered a false alarm.

USER — Any resident, person, corporation, partnership, institution, company, or other entity which has installed an AAD designed or intended to alert an emergency service agency and to elicit their response.

§ 90-4. Registration of alarm installation; fees. [Amended by 8-13-1990 by Ord. No. 1990-2; 4-13-1992 by Ord. No. 1992-2A]

- A. Within 30 days from the effective date of this chapter, every alarm business which installs an AAD shall register such installation with the Chief of Police on a form provided by the Police Department. Such registration shall be accomplished by the alarm business within two weeks from the date the installation is completed. The information to be provided shall include the following:
- (1) The name, residence address and telephone number of the user.
 - (2) The address where the AAD is installed and the telephone number of that address.
 - (3) The names, addresses and telephone numbers of at least two persons who are authorized to gain entry into the protected premises and who are available to respond within 30 minutes of notification.
 - (4) The name, address and telephone number of the alarm equipment supplier and person responsible for maintenance of the AAD.
 - (5) The date on which the alarm business completed the installation.
- B. All information furnished pursuant to this section shall be kept confidential and shall be for the exclusive use of the Police Department.
- C. A fee, as established from time to time by the Borough Council, shall be paid for each such registration.
- D. Every alarm business is required to provide each user of an AAD with a notice summarizing the provisions of this chapter. Such notices shall be available for the New Hope Police Department.

§ 90-5. Fees for false alarms. [Amended 8-13-1990 by Ord. No. 1990-2]

- A. The fees for false alarms are as established from time to time by the Borough Council.
- B. For the first three false alarms within a one-year period, the Police Department shall send a suitable notice of the false alarm to the user of the AAD generating or causing the false alarm at his mailing address if known, or to the address of the location at which the AAD is located. After the third false alarm in a one-year period, the Police Department shall send a suitable notice to the user advising him of the fee, the amount to be paid to the Borough therefor, the time limitations for payment, the place of payment, and that failure to pay the fee within the prescribed time is a violation of this chapter.
- C. The fee shall be paid by the user within 10 days of notice at the New Hope Borough building.
- D. Failure to pay any fee as described in this section shall be a violation of this chapter subject to the penalties provided in § 90-9.

§ 90-6. New installations.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, a grace period of 30 days shall be permitted for any new installation of an AAD, provided that a permit for such AAD has been obtained as set forth in this chapter. During the thirty-day grace period, which shall begin on the day that the installation is completed, no false alarms will be considered for purposes of determining fees for false alarms as set forth in § 90-5.

§ 90-7. Specifications and characteristics of AADs.

- A. The sensory mechanism used in connection with any AAD must be designed and adjusted to suppress false indications of intrusion or fire so that the device will not be activated by impulses due to momentary pressure changes in water pipes, normal changes in atmospheric pressure or humidity, flashes of light, normal rattling or vibrating of doors and windows, the vibrations to the premises caused by passing vehicles, or any other occurrence not related to a genuine emergency. All such devices must be maintained by the user in good repair to insure maximum reliability of operation and minimum occurrences of false alarms.
- B. AADs which use automatic telephone dialing mechanisms shall transmit a message approved by the Chief of Police. Such AADs shall not make more than two telephone calls to an emergency service agency during any one cycle of the alarm function. The message shall be no longer than 15 seconds in duration and shall not be repeated more than twice.
- C. AADs which generate an audible alarm which can be heard outside the premises in which the AAD is installed shall be designed to stop generating the audible alarm after 30 minutes of operation. After 90 days of the effective date of this chapter, all audible alarms not in compliance with this section shall be unlawful and must be disconnected.

§ 90-8. Operation of alarm business. [Amended 8-13-1990 by Ord. No. 1990-2; 4-13-1992 by Ord. No. 1992-2A]

- A. It shall be unlawful for any alarm business to install AADs in New Hope Borough without first obtaining a permit from the Chief of Police. The permit shall be renewable annually at a fee to be established from time to time by Borough Council.
- B. It shall be unlawful for any alarm business or its representatives to represent to any customer, user or sales prospect that the New Hope Police Department endorses, recommends or otherwise approves of the alarm business's service or equipment. It shall be unlawful to represent that the Police Department furnished any information concerning any customer, user or sales prospect to the alarm business or its representatives.
- C. It shall be unlawful to conduct a test or demonstration of any AAD without the permission of the Chief of Police or his designate. No permission is required, however, if the alarm or signal will not cause the response of any emergency service agency.
- D. All alarm businesses operating within New Hope Borough shall, at the time of obtaining the annual permit, submit to the Chief of Police a list of users which had AADs installed during the prior year, together with the names, addresses and phone numbers of all users then currently being serviced by the alarm business at the time of application.

§ 90-9. Violations and penalties. [Amended 8-13-1990 by Ord. No. 1990-2]

Failure of any person, corporation, partnership, business, institution, or other entity to comply with the provisions of this chapter or any section thereof shall constitute an offense punishable by a fine of not more than \$600 and costs, or in default of payment thereof, shall be subject to imprisonment for a term not to exceed 30 days. Failure to pay a false alarm fee within the prescribed time limits shall result in a penalty in addition to the amount of the fee assessed.