

CHAPTER 45

ALARM SYSTEMS

1. DEFINITION. For the purposes of this Chapter, unless context clearly indicates otherwise, the following words and terms are defined as follows:

(a) Alarm: Any audible, visible, mechanical or electrical signal or intelligence indicating existence of a supposed fire or emergency requiring both response and emergency action on the part of the fire-fighting, police or other emergency service; and additionally, the alarm device or devices by which fire, emergency or other disturbance signals are received.

(b) Alarm System: Any alarm-initiating device or assembly of equipment that automatically detects heat, smoke or other products of combustion or need of other public safety or emergency response.

(c) Alarm User: means a person(s), firm, partnership, corporation, association, organization, company, or other entity in control of a protected premise where an alarm system is located.

(d) Automatic Dialing Device: A device programmed to transmit by telephone line an alarm to a telephone number selected in advance.

(e) False Alarm: means activation or transmission of any alarm signal caused by human error, mechanical or electronic malfunction, negligence of the alarm user or alarm user's employee, whether or not the exact cause of the alarm activation is determined, or any other activation or transmission or any alarm signal where no actual fire or emergency actually exists. Severe weather, power outages, transmission line malfunctions, acts of God, malicious acts of persons not under the control of the alarm user, or any other cause clearly beyond the control of the alarm user will be considered in determining if an alarm activation was false and whether or not any occurrence, fine, warning or other punitive action will be taken against the alarm user as provided by this ordinance.

(f) Alarm Answering Point: A facility operated and maintained at a location, other than the City of Decatur Emergency Communication Center, wherein alarm systems terminate and are initially received and answered.

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2. APPROVED ALARM SYSTEM: All alarms shall be U.L. Or F.M. Approved. All installed fire alarm systems shall meet all International Building Codes and International Fire Prevention Codes as established by the City of Decatur.

3. GOOD WORKING ORDER:

(a) Alarm systems shall be installed, maintained and operated so as not to generate false alarms due to system defect, lack of maintenance, employee error or other malfunction. All fire alarm systems shall be installed, operated and maintained in accordance with the International Building Code, the International Fire Code and NFPA 72, and the manufacturer recommendations.

(b) Every alarm system so installed or maintained shall be so operated as not to transmit false alarms.

4. LIST OF NAMES: Every alarm user of an alarm system so installed and operated, within the City limits, shall provide the alarm company, answering service, or other termination point to which the alarm is directed with a current list of persons who are authorized and readily available to assist at the premise or facility at any time an alarm is transmitted therefrom.

5. DISCONNECTION. Any alarm system not installed, maintained or operated as provided herein may be prohibited from transmitting alarms to said central communications facility upon order of the Chief of the affected department, or after reasonable notice, fire, police or other emergency response to the premises of alarm origination may be terminated.

6. PRIVATE DIRECT SERVICE ONLY: Relay to the City of Decatur Communication Center, of alarms received by an alarm answering point, shall only be by private direct line service from such point terminating at a private telephone installed and maintained at the Communication Center facility at the expense of the alarm service. Permission for the installation and maintenance of which line and telephone shall be authorized by the Chief of Police.

7. CHARGES FOR FALSE ALARM: (1) Continued Free Warnings: The allowance of four free warnings to both residential and commercial customers. (2) Graduated Fine Structure: Following the four free false alarms, a charge of \$100.00 each false alarms five (5) through eight (8), \$200.00 each for false alarms nine and ten, and \$300.00 each for more than 10 false alarm calls for commercial facilities. For residential facilities, the allowance of four free false alarm calls and a charge of \$50.00 each for false alarms five (5) through eight (8), \$100.00 each for false alarms (9) and (10), and \$150.00 each for each false alarm after the 10th alarm.

(AMENDED, Ordinance No. 2008-56, August 4, 2008)

8. WAIVER OF CHARGE: Said response charge may be waived by the Chief of the affected Department upon due investigation taking into account the cause and circumstances of such false alarm.

9. NONPAYMENT OF CHARGE: Should any alarm user fail to reasonably and promptly pay a response charge after being billed for the same, said charge may be recovered by appropriate court action or, after reasonable notice, fire, police or other emergency service response to the premises of alarm origination may be terminated.

10. RULES AND REGULATIONS: The City Manager is authorized to promulgate and publish such reasonable rules and regulations, not in conflict with the provisions hereof, as may be deemed by said officer to be necessary or desirable to administer said provisions and to carry out the purposes thereof.