

DARIEN FIRE ALARM ORDINANCE

Chapter 20

FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS

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§20-1. **Purpose.**

The purpose of this ordinance is to reduce False Fire Alarms in Darien by having Alarm Owners, Contractors, Alarm Companies and Monitoring Companies take steps to prevent False Fire Alarms. These actions include installing proper equipment appropriately; operating the Alarm Systems to minimize False Fire Alarms; maintaining the Alarm System; having Monitoring Companies Verify False Fire Alarms, and canceling alarms which are determined to be false.

§20-2. **Definitions.**

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

- (a) ALARM ADMINISTRATOR - A person or persons designated by the First Selectman, or his or her designee, who shall administer and enforce the terms and provisions of this ordinance.
- (b) ALARM COMPANY - A firm, corporation or other entity that sells, leases, assigns, lends, installs, maintains, services, repairs, alters, moves or replaces Alarm Systems.
- (c) ALARM OWNER - The owner of any premises in which an Alarm System is used, provided that an occupant who expressly accepts responsibility for an Alarm System by registration pursuant to Section 20-3 hereof shall be deemed the Alarm Owner.
- (d) ALARM SYSTEM - Any device that is installed for the purpose of detecting fire emergencies, and (a) transmits a signal to a Monitoring Company that relays information to the Darien Emergency Communication Center or (b) produces an audible or visible signal to which the Police or Fire Department are expected to respond. Specifically excluded from this definition and the scope of this ordinance are devices which are designed to alert or signal only persons within the premises in which the device is installed.
- (e) AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE DIALING ALARM SYSTEM - An Alarm System which automatically sends a prerecorded voice message or coded signal over public telephone lines.
- (f) CONTRACTOR - A person or persons who, for valid consideration, undertakes to perform a job or piece of work.
- (g) DARIEN EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CENTER - The facility established and maintained by the Town of Darien to receive emergency alarms and calls to dispatch fire fighting personnel to respond thereto.
- (h) FALSE FIRE ALARM - The activation of an Alarm System to which fire department personnel are dispatched to respond and which is not caused by a fire or an emergency. For purposes of Sections 20-9 and 20-10 hereof, once emergency personnel are dispatched the alarm, if determined not to be caused by a fire or an emergency, shall be considered a false fire alarm.
- (i) Officer-in-Charge as defined by Section 7-313e of the Connecticut General Statutes.
- (j) KEYHOLDER - A person authorized by the Alarm Owner to enter, and permit emergency personnel to enter, the Alarm Owner's premises.
- (k) MONITORING COMPANY - A firm, corporation or other entity responsible for receiving alarm signals from remote locations, monitoring those signals and relaying alarm information to the Darien Emergency Communication Center.
- (l) VERIFY - An attempt by a Monitoring Company to determine if the alarm is known to be false by contacting the alarm site by telephonic or other electronic means, whether or not actual contact with a person is made.

§ 20-3. **Registration by Alarm Owners.**

- (a) In addition to the Connecticut General Statutes building permit requirement for new or modified Alarm Systems, every Alarm Owner shall register his Alarm System with the alarm Administrator no later than January 1, 2002 or prior to use.
- (b) Registration shall be accomplished by completing a form provided by the Alarm Administrator. Such registration form shall set forth, at a minimum, the name, address and telephone number of the Alarm Owner and a Keyholder.
- (c) It shall be the responsibility of each Alarm Owner to notify the Alarm Administrator of changes in the registration information.

§ 20-4. **Registration by Alarm Companies.**

- (a) Each Alarm Company shall register with the Alarm Administrator. Registration shall be accomplished by completing a form provided by the Alarm Administrator. Such registration form shall set forth, at a minimum, the name, address and telephone number of the Alarm Company.
- (b) It shall be the responsibility of each Alarm Company to notify the Alarm Administrator of changes in the registration information.

§ 20-5. **Registration by Monitoring Companies.**

- (a) Each Monitoring Company shall register with the Alarm Administrator. Registration shall be accomplished by completing a form provided by the Alarm Administrator. Such registration form shall set forth, at a minimum, the name, address and telephone number of the Monitoring Company.
- (b) It shall be the responsibility of each Monitoring Company to notify the Alarm Administrator of changes in the registration information.

§ 20-6. **Automatic Telephone Dialing Alarm Systems.**

Automatic Telephone Dialing Alarm Systems that send messages directly to the Darien Emergency Communication Center are prohibited.

§ 20-7. **Exterior Audible Alarms.**

Except as otherwise provided by law, no Alarm System that produces an exterior audible alarm shall be installed or maintained unless the exterior audible alarm automatically deactivates within a period of fifteen (15) minutes.

§20-8. **Auxiliary Power Sources.**

Every Alarm System installed after the effective date of this ordinance shall have its own auxiliary power source. All auxiliary power sources including, but not limited to, those installed prior to the effective date of this ordinance shall be maintained in good working order.

§20-9. **Reporting of False Fire Alarms.**

- (a) The Fire Officer-in-Charge shall report False Fire Alarms to the Alarm Administrator. The report shall include, among other things, whether the False Fire Alarm occurred while a Contractor was present.

- (b) It shall be the responsibility of the Monitoring Company to notify the Alarm Owner or his designee whenever the Monitoring Company reports an alarm activation to the Darien Emergency Communication Center.

§20-10. Fines and Charges.

Any person or entity who performs or causes any of the following acts shall be subject to the fine or charge shown below for each such act, which fine or charge shall be paid within 30 days. Alarm Owners are subject to the False Fire Alarm fine for each False Fire Alarm from their Alarm System.

- (a) False Fire Alarm: \$100 fine.
- (b) Use of an Automatic Telephone Dialing Alarm System: \$100 fine.
- (c) Failure of an Alarm Owner, Alarm Company or Monitoring Company to register: \$25 fine.
- (d) Failure of a registered Alarm Owner, registered Alarm Company or registered Monitoring Company to notify the Alarm Administrator of changes in the registration information within ten (10) days of the change: \$25 fine.
- (e) Use of an exterior audible alarm system except as provided in Section 20-7 hereof: \$25 fine.
- (f) Failure to install or maintain an auxiliary power source as required in Section 20-8 hereof: \$25 fine.
- (g) Failure to make timely payment of fines or charges: \$25 late fee and an 18% per annum interest charge.

§ 20-11. Lien on Property.

Any person or entity who has a judgment entered against him for more than \$1,000, is subject to a lien on his property for the amount of the judgment plus fees and costs, as provided by the Connecticut General Statutes.

§20-12. Town of Darien Fire Services

Payments received under Sections 20-10 hereof shall be credited to a separate account to be used to improve the fire services.

§20-13. Confidential Information.

The registration information from Alarm Owners shall not be divulged without the prior written consent of the Alarm Owner concerned. This provision shall not be construed to limit access to information as provided by law.

§ 20-14. Liability.

Except as expressly provided herein, the Town of Darien, its departments, officers, agents and employees shall be under no obligation whatsoever regarding the

adequacy, operation or maintenance of any Alarm System, Alarm Company or Monitoring Company. No liability whatsoever is assumed for the failure of any such Alarm System, Alarm Company or Monitoring Company to perform, or for any act or omission in connection with such Alarm Systems, Alarm Companies or Monitoring Companies.

§ 20-15. **Enforcement.**

The provisions of this ordinance are designated for enforcement in accordance Chapter 98 of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Town of Darien may institute civil proceedings to enforce the provisions herein contained.

§ 20-16. **Severability.**

The invalidity of any part or parts of this ordinance shall not affect the validity of the remaining parts.

§ 20-17. **Effective Date.**

Unless otherwise provided, the provisions of this ordinance shall become effective sixty days after publication as provided in Section 57 of the Darien Charter.