

# CHAPTER 14.2

## ALARM ORDINANCE

### Section 14.2-1. Title.

This Ordinance shall be known as the **Alarm Ordinance** for the City of Laurel.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-1, 9-8-98*

### Section 14.2-2. Definitions, as used in this Ordinance.

(a) **ALARM ADMINISTRATOR:**

An individual designated by the Mayor of the City of Laurel, to oversee the enforcement of this Ordinance. The Alarm Administrator shall oversee, administer, enforce this Ordinance and assess all Administrative Service fees for violations of this Chapter.

(b) **ALARM COMPANY:**

Any company, individual or commercial enterprise seeking to conduct the sale, service, installation, or monitoring of any security or fire alarm system in the City of Laurel, Mississippi.

(c) **ALARM SYSTEM:**

An assembly of equipment or devices arranged to summon either the Laurel Police or Fire Departments in an urgent manner to render emergency service. This does not include automobile alarms.

(d) **ALARM USER:**

Any person who owns, possesses, controls, or otherwise exercises dominion over property upon which an alarm system is placed or installed.

(e) AUDIBLE ALARM:

Any alarm system that emits an audible signal that may be heard by persons outside the protected building, structure or facility that is not connected to a monitor system or directly connected to the Police or Fire Departments by telephone.

(f) CALENDAR YEAR:

Shall mean January 1 through December 31 of each twelve (12) month period.

(g) FALSE ALARM:

A bell or siren, mechanical, electrical or telephone apparatus or combination thereof which is activated for the purpose of summoning the Police or Fire Departments to respond to a holdup, burglary, unauthorized entry, fire, or other emergency when in fact the service is not called for. This shall not include activations due to weather.

(h) TELEPHONIC ALARM:

Any mechanism, device or equipment which is designed to operate automatically through use of the telephone system to transmit a message of warning to another location.

(i) VIOLATOR:

Any Alarm User or Alarm Company or other person that violates any term of this Chapter.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-2, 9-8-98*

**Section 14.2-3. Permits and Licenses Required.**

- (a) Any Alarm Company selling, servicing, installing or monitoring a security or fire Alarm System in the City of Laurel, Mississippi, must first obtain a Privilege License from the City Clerk's Office. Each permit is valid for one (1) year. Such enterprise may also be referred to as an Alarm Company.
- (b) Any Alarm User that does not have a Privilege License hereunder and desires to install any Alarm System on any property in the City of Laurel must first obtain a special permit from the Inspection Department. However, any Alarm User that is having an Alarm System installed by an Alarm Company holding a privilege license hereunder is not required to have this additional permit.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-3, 9-8-98*

**Section 14.2-4. Notification Information.**

- (a) All Alarm Users shall furnish, to the monitoring company, the names and telephone numbers of two (2) persons who can respond within thirty (30) minutes to reset the alarm. Each alarm site shall be marked in such a manner as to allow the Police or Fire Departments to retrieve this information from the alarm company or other source.
- (b) Each Alarm Company, monitoring company, or any organization involved in the monitoring of alarms shall maintain a resource file where names and telephone numbers of contact persons for each alarm will be available to the Police and Fire Department. This file shall be updated yearly or when a change is known.
- (c) Failure to comply with this section shall result in either the Alarm User, Alarm Company or other such organization involved in alarm monitoring being assessed an Administrative Service fee of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) per incident.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-4, 9-8-98*

#### **Section 14.2-5. Audible Alarms.**

- (a) Audible Alarm sites shall have conspicuously affixed on the exterior of the building, near or adjacent to the main entrance, the name and telephone number of the alarm company, if any, and the telephone number of two (2) persons who are responsible for the control of the system in absence of the Alarm User.
- (b) Audible Alarms shall automatically discontinue emitting audible sound within fifteen (15) minutes.
- (c) Any audible alarm system installed prior to implementation of this ordinance shall be replaced, removed, or otherwise brought into compliance with the requirements of subsection (a) and (b) of this section no later than thirty (30) days from the date of the first incident in violation of this section. The thirty (30) day period will commence from the date of notification of the violation by the Alarm Administrator.
- (d) Alarm Users failing to comply with this section shall be charged with an Administrative Service fee of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) per incident.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-5, 9-8-98*

#### **Section 14.2-6. Telephonic Alarms.**

- (a) No Alarm User shall operate or maintain a privately installed telephonic alarm system which automatically transmits messages or warnings to the Communications Center of the City of Laurel Police Department or Fire Department without first obtaining proper license and business permits from the City of Laurel.

- (b) Alarm Users violating this section shall be charged with an Administrative Service fee of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) per incident.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-6, 9-8-98*

**Section 14.2-7. False Alarm Response Administrative Service Fee, Responsibility of Alarm User.**

An Administrative Service fee shall be charged to Alarm Users or other Violators for False Alarm responses in accordance with the following number of False Alarms per calendar year. Warning letters will be sent to the Alarm Users or Violators by the Alarm Administrator starting with the first (1<sup>st</sup>) False Alarm. There shall be no charge for the first three (3) False Alarms during any calendar year. Thereafter, for each additional False Alarm during the calendar year the Alarm Administrator shall charge the following administrative service fee to the Violator for each additional incident as follows: False Alarms Nos. 4-8, \$100.00 each; and False Alarms Nos. 9 and over, \$250.00 each.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-7, 9-8-98*

**Section 14.2-8. Authority to Pursue Obligation.**

If any Violator fails to pay an Administrative Service fee assessed and invoiced pursuant to this Chapter within thirty (30) days after such invoice is postmarked and mailed to the Violator's address, the City may institute a civil action against said Violator for the recovery and collection of said fee.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-8, 9-8-98*

**Section 14.2-9. Exemptions to Administrative Service Fees.**

The Alarm Administrator shall have broad discretion in granting exemptions from administrative service fees on False Alarms that were caused by outside reasons that can be substantiated. Some examples are:

- (a) MAINTENANCE:

Alarm activation caused by a person working on the system with prior notification to the Communication Center of the City of Laurel Police Department shall not be considered a false or unknown activation. Notification shall include the following:

1. Proper identification of the alarm business or user and identification of the individual(s) performing the work.
2. Exact location of the alarm.
3. Estimated time of completion of the work or test.

- (b) ACTS OF GOD OR THIRD PARTY ACCIDENTS:

There shall be no assessment against the Alarm User or Violator for False Alarms which can be substantiated as being activated by disruption or disturbance of utility service or by vehicle-utility pole accidents or by storm or other weather conditions or by animals or some similar incident or third party.

(c) OTHER EXEMPTIONS:

The Administrator shall have broad discretion to consider other reasons to grant exemptions from administrative service fees to any Violator for False Alarm where said reason can be substantiated to the satisfaction of the Alarm Administrator.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-9, 9-8-98*

**Section 14.2-10. Appeal Process.**

(a) ALARM REVIEW PANEL:

1. Composition

An Alarm Review Panel will be composed of the Alarm Administrator and single representatives from the Laurel Police and Fire Departments. The Alarm Administrator shall be appointed by the Mayor with the Chief of each department to appoint the representative from their Department.

2. Responsibility

The Panel will be charged with the proper review and consideration of appeals from the assessment of Administrative Service fees by the Alarm Administrator. The Panel has the authority to specify administrative action to be taken and to grant the appropriate relief, if any.

(b) APPEAL PROTOCOL:

Any Violator may appeal assessment of an Administrative Service fee to the Alarm Review Panel by filing a written request for hearing with the Alarm Administrator of the City of Laurel and setting forth the reasons for the appeal within ten (10) days after receiving written notification of the violation of this Ordinance and the assessment of said fee. This action will stay collection efforts until final determination in the case has been rendered.

(c) HEARING:

The Alarm Review Panel will conduct a hearing to consider all evidence and make a decision on the basis of the evidence presented. The Alarm Administrator will notify the appealing party of the date of the hearing in writing.

(d) DISPOSITION:

The Alarm Review Panel will render a decision within thirty (30) days after the appeal is heard. The Violator shall be notified in writing by the Alarm Administrator of the Review Panel's decision by mail to the Violator at the address provided in the notice of appeal. The Panel will have the authority to affirm, revise, or modify the Administrative Service fee assessed. This decision will be final as to administrative remedies.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-10, 9-8-98*

#### **Section 14.2-11. Annual Review.**

The Alarm Administrator will prepare an Annual Alarm Report for the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief. The report will include the number of alarms responded to, the number of false/unknown alarms, the Administrative Service fees assessed, revenue collected, most frequent violations and other appropriate information.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-11, 9-8-98*

#### **Section 14.2-12. Fire Alarms.**

All Fire Alarm Systems shall be maintained according to the International Fire Code, 2018 Edition, as adopted by the City, or the most recent version of said Code as it may be hereafter amended.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-12, 9-8-98; Ordinance No. 1393-2000, §IX, 10-2-01; Ordinance No. 1559-2010; §IX, 5-4-10; Ordinance No. 1705-2021, § VIII, 3-16-21*

#### **Section 14.2-13. Repeal.**

This Alarm Ordinance shall repeal and replace any and all Ordinances that regulate alarms described herein that are currently in effect and inconsistent with the terms of this Ordinance.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-13, 9-8-98*

#### **Section 14.2-14. Effective Date.**

This Ordinance shall be effective thirty (30) days after its passage.

*Source: Ordinance No. 1323-1998, §14.2-14, 9-8-98*

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