

ARTICLE VII
Police and Fire Emergency Alarm Systems
[Adopted 4-14-1997 by Ord. No. 2029]

§ 13-69. Short title.

This article shall be known and may be cited as "Whitehall Township Police and Fire Emergency Alarm Ordinance."

§ 13-70. Definitions.

The following definitions shall apply in the interpretation and enforcement of this article:

ALARM — Any siren, bell, horn or other device which is attached to the interior or exterior of a structure and emits a warning signal audible outside the structure or transmits a prerecorded voice alarm or other signal and is designed to attract attention, or transmits a message to an Emergency Communication Center, whether that of Whitehall Township or otherwise, when activated by a criminal act or other emergency requiring police or firemen to respond.

ALARM REGISTRATION — Documentation pertaining to any alarm system, other than a residential sensory device, which identifies the owner or lessee of the system, the address of the property which is protected by the system, the identity of individuals authorized to respond to the alarm in order to gain access to the property and deactivate the system, the identity of the firm or individual who installed the system and can provide emergency repair service and any other data required by the Whitehall Township Police or Fire Chief.

AUTOMATIC PROTECTION DEVICE — An electrically operated instrument composed of sensory apparatus and related hardware which automatically transmits a prerecorded voice alarm or other similar message over telephone line, by direct or indirect connection to an Emergency Communication Center, upon receipt of a stimulus from sensory apparatus that has detected a physical force or other stimulus inherently characteristic of a fire or intrusion.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION CENTER — A protection system or group of such systems, operated privately for customers or publicly by a person, firm, corporation or governmental entity which maintains, supervises or accepts recorded messages from automatic protection devices at a central station having operators that have the duty to take appropriate action upon receipt of a signal or message.

FALSE ALARMS — Any alarm or signal activated by an automatic protection device, or any other kind of direct or indirect signal given to an Emergency Communication Center, or any signal given from a residential sensory device, to which police or firemen respond, which is not the result of weather extremes, burglary, fire, robbery or similar emergency.

INSTALLER — Any company, corporation or individual which has contracted to engage or engaged in the act of installing fire, intrusion, water alarm or medical systems, where the system is designed to require a response from any emergency service.

KEY — To use a telephone line and equipment for transmitting a message either directly or indirectly by an automatic protection device.

RESIDENTIAL SENSORY DEVICE — A device attached to the interior of a residential structure which is not tied to an Emergency Communication Center nor intended to be audible on the exterior of the structure to which it is attached.

TOWNSHIP — The Township of Whitehall, County of Lehigh, Pennsylvania.

§ 13-71. Alarms; installation requirements.

- A. Within 60 days from the effective date of this article, every owner and lessee of an alarm, other than a residential sensory device, shall register same with the Police Department of Whitehall Township. Such registration shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following information:
 - (1) The name, residence and telephone number of the owner or lessee.
 - (2) The address where the device is installed and the telephone number of that address.
 - (3) The names, address and telephone numbers of at least two persons who are authorized to respond to an alarm and gain access to the address where the device is installed.
 - (4) The name, address and phone number of the installer which installed the alarm.
- B. After the enactment of this article, all alarms (other than residential sensory devices) shall be equipped with timing mechanisms that will disengage the alarm after a maximum period of 15 minutes from the time that the alarm is engaged. Alarms (other than residential sensory devices) without such timing mechanism shall be unlawful in the Township and must be equipped with a timing mechanism or disconnected within 60 days from the effective date of this article. All alarms and the installation thereof shall:
 - (1) Comply with all other Township ordinances, rules and regulations including, but not limited to, the Township Building, electrical and property maintenance codes.
 - (2) Be installed by a certified installer.
- C. Within 60 days after the effective date of this article all persons owning or operating existing or new automatic protection device that transmits recorded message directly to an Emergency Communication Center shall contact the Whitehall Township Emergency Communication Center for the proper transmission procedure.
- D. All information furnished pursuant to these sections shall be kept confidential and shall be solely for the use of the Whitehall Township Police Department.

§ 13-72. Alarm operation requirements.

Alarms installed in the Township that are keyed to an assigned truck line in the Lehigh County Emergency Communication Center or alarms installed in the Township that provide communication with the Whitehall Township Communications Center, with or without an intermediary, shall meet the following requirements:

- A. No more than two calls shall be made to the Lehigh County Emergency Communication Center as a result of a single activation of the automatic protection device.
- B. The sensory mechanism used in conjunction with an automatic protection device must be adjusted to suppress false indications of fire or intrusion, so that the device will not actuated by

impulses due to fleeting pressure changes in water pipes, short flashes of light, the rattling or vibrating of doors and windows, vibrations to the premises caused by the passing of vehicles, weather extremes or any other similar force not related to emergencies requiring protection.

- C. All components comprising an automatic protection device must be maintained by the owner or lessee in good repair to assure maximum reliability of operation.
- D. Each owner or lessee of premises in which an automatic protection device is installed shall be required to provide external visible and legible identification of the installer on the protected structure on or near the main entrance. This identification shall include a twenty-four-hour emergency telephone number where someone can be reached to deactivate the system.

§ 13-73. Automatic protection devices; technical information.

Each installer who sells or leases an automatic protection device in the Township after the effective date of this article which is keyed to an Emergency Communication Center or intermediary shall furnish to the owner or lessee: operating instructions, a circuit diagram, a maintenance manual and written information as to how service may be obtained, including the telephone number of the installer or agent responsible for service.

§ 13-74. Automatic protection devices; repair service.

- A. Each installer who installs an automatic protection device in the Township shall make service available to the owner or lessee of same, directly or through an agent, within 24 hours of a request by such owner or lessee for repair or service. Such service shall be made available to such owner or lessee at his/her election and expense.
- B. The owner or lessee of an automatic protection device shall be responsible for having any device rendering a false alarm disconnected or repaired within one hour of the commencement of the first such false alarm.

§ 13-75. Automatic protection devices; disconnecting.

When messages evidencing failure to comply with the operational requirements set forth in any section of this article are received by the Whitehall Township or Lehigh County Emergency Communications Center, the automatic protection device sending such message shall be disconnected in order to relieve the particular emergency service from responding to false alarms.

§ 13-76. Civil penalties and remedies for violation.

- A. Any person, firm or corporation who shall violate any provision of this article shall, upon conviction thereof, be sentenced to pay a fine of not less than \$75 or more than \$1,000 plus costs and, in default of payment of said fine and costs, to a term of imprisonment not to exceed 30 days. Each day that a violation of this article continues shall constitute a separate offense. [Amended 8-8-2005 by Ord. No. 2578]
- B. In the event that more than three false alarms, as defined in § 13-70 hereof, are received within any given six consecutive months from any automatic protection device, alarm or residential sensory device, the owner, lessor or user of such device or alarm shall, upon conviction before a magistrate, District Justice or court, be fined such amount as set forth in the Whitehall Township fee schedule, as amended from time to time, for each offense (residential establishment) and such amount as set forth in the Whitehall Township fee schedule, as amended from time to time, for each offense (nonresidential establishment). Each false alarm

in excess of three within six consecutive months shall constitute a separate violation and shall be deemed a separate offense.

- C. The provisions of this section shall be waived for a period of 15 days from the date that the Township receives written notice of the initial installation of an alarm, automatic protection device or residential sensory alarm.

§ 13-77. Registration fees; permits.

Fees for installation permits and registration are as set forth in the Whitehall Township Fee Schedule, as amended from time to time.

M-10 Fire or emergency alarms.

10.01 Installation permit fees (for which no permit has been secured)

- a. Residential dwelling: \$45.
- b. Commercial or industrial building: \$65.

10.02 Annual registration fee: no fee if installation permit fee paid when electrical permit secured, otherwise, \$5.

10.03 Excessive false alarms:

- a. Residential dwelling: \$25.
- b. Commercial or industrial building: \$200.