

Chapter 72

ALARMS

§ 72-1. Definitions.

§ 72-2. Permits.

§ 72-3. Operational standards.

§ 72-4. Intentional false alarm.

§ 72-5. False alarm charges.

§ 72-6. Installation fees; exemptions.

§ 72-7. Liability.

§ 72-8. Violations and penalties;
notification.

§ 72-9. Alarm system placed out of
service.

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Borough Council of the Borough of Dormont 8-7-1995 as Ord. No. 1450. Amendments noted where applicable.]

§ 72-1. Definitions.

For purposes of this chapter, the following terms are defined as follows:

ALARM — A communication to the Police Department indicating that a crime, fire or other emergency situation warranting immediate action by the Police or Fire Department or by Medical Rescue Team South has occurred or is occurring.

ALARM DEVICE — An electronic device designed to:

- A. Transmit automatically an alarm by wire, telephone, radio or other means directly to a person who is instructed to notify the Police Department of the alarm; or
- B. Sound a general alarm to alert passersby or neighbors to notify the Police Department.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATOR — An electronic device which automatically transmits a digital message to the digital receiver of the Police Department.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL — Medical Rescue Team South.

FALSE ALARM — An alarm to which the Police or Fire Departments, and/or the Medical Rescue Team South respond resulting from the activation of an alarm device when a crime, fire or other emergency warranting immediate action by the appropriate department has not, in fact, occurred. It shall include all alarm signal activation incidents in which investigation by the appropriate department reveals no evidence of the existence of an emergency condition. Those alarm signals that investigation reveals to have been triggered by physical damage to the protected premises as a result of hurricane, tornado, earthquake or other natural phenomena are excluded from the definition of "false alarm."

FIRE COMMISSIONER — The Fire Commissioner of the borough.

FIRE DEPARTMENT — The Dormont Volunteer Fire Department.

INDIRECT ALARM DEVICE — An alarm device designed to transmit an alarm to a person who is instructed to notify the Police Department of the alarm or to sound a general alarm to alert passersby or neighbors to notify the Police Department.

INTENTIONAL FALSE ALARM — A false alarm resulting from the intentional activation of an alarm device by an individual under circumstances where the individual has no reasonable basis to believe that a crime, fire or other emergency warranting immediate action by the emergency services has occurred or is occurring.

MONITORING AGENCY — Any firm, corporation or person who operates, maintains, installs, leases or sells automatic protection devices and whose duties include monitoring and maintaining the devices.

PERMIT HOLDER — A person to whom the Police Department or Fire Commissioner have issued an alarm device permit.

POLICE DEPARTMENT — The Police Department of the borough.

TELEPHONE DIALER ALARM DEVICE — An alarm device designed to transmit automatically a recorded message over regular telephone lines by indirect alarm device to the Police Department.

§ 72-2. Permits.

- A. It shall be unlawful for a property owner, lessee of property or a person otherwise occupying a premises within the municipality to install a fire alarm system on the premises without first obtaining an installation permit from the Fire Commissioner. In order to obtain the installation permit, plans and drawings for the alarm system, an application for a permit and a fee must be submitted to the Fire Commissioner in accordance with the requirements of the BOCA, Building and Fire Prevention Codes, Chapters 83 and 110 of the Borough of Dormont.
- B. It shall be unlawful for a property owner, lessee of property or a person otherwise occupying a premises within the municipality to operate an alarm device on his premises without first obtaining an alarm device permit from the Police Department or Fire Commissioner.
- C. Application.
 - (1) In order to apply for an alarm device permit, a person must submit an application to the Police Department stating the following:
 - (a) The name of the applicant.
 - (b) The home and business addresses and the telephone number of each such applicant.
 - (c) The location at which the alarm device will be installed and operated.
 - (d) The type of alarm; police, fire or EMS.
 - (e) The names, addresses and telephone numbers of at least two (2) individuals who have keys to the premises at which the alarm device is located and who are

authorized to enter the premises at any time, but who do not reside at the location of the alarm device, and are able to respond and present a key within fifteen (15) minutes of the activation of an alarm device.

- (f) A complete description of the alarm device.
 - (g) If the alarm device is to be leased or rented from, or is to be serviced pursuant to a service agreement by, a person other than the person making application for an alarm device permit, the name, address and telephone number of that person.
- (2) In addition, each person submitting an application for an alarm device permit shall submit a signed statement in the following form:

“I (We) the undersigned applicant(s) for an alarm device permit, intending to be legally bound hereby, state that neither I (we), nor anyone claiming by, through or under me (us), shall make any claim against Dormont, Pennsylvania, for any damage caused to the premises at which the alarm device, which is the subject of this application, is or will be located, if such damage is caused by a forced entry to premises by authorized representatives of Dormont, Pennsylvania, in order to answer an alarm from said alarm device at a time when said premises are or appear to be unattended or when in the discretion of said authorized representatives circumstances appear to warrant a forced entry.

“Further, I (we) hereby agree that, periodically and upon forty-eight (48) hours written notice, representatives of the Police Department or Fire Commissioner of Dormont, Pennsylvania, shall be allowed to enter my (our) premises between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays for the purpose of inspecting my (our) alarm device installation in order to determine whether or not it is in accordance with the operational standards set forth in § 72-3 of this chapter.”

- D. The Police Department or Fire Commissioner shall furnish forms upon which any person wishing to apply for an alarm device permit may submit his application.
- E. The Police Department or Fire Commissioner shall, within ten (10) business days from receipt of an application for an alarm device permit, either grant an alarm device permit to the applicant or notify the applicant in writing that his application has been denied and the reason or reasons why it has been denied.
- F. An application for an alarm device permit may only be denied for any one (1) of the following reasons:
 - (1) The application submitted by the applicant does not conform to § 72-2C or any part thereof;
 - (2) The applicant’s alarm device does not conform to the operational standards set forth in § 72-3; or
 - (3) The fire alarm system plans submitted for review does not meet the requirements of the Building and Fire Prevention Codes, Chapters 83 and 110 of the Borough of Dormont.
- G. The Police Department or Fire Commissioner shall have the power to revoke an alarm device permit. An alarm device permit shall be revoked by notifying the permit holder in

writing that his alarm device permit has been revoked and the reason or reasons why it has been revoked. Said written notice shall be:

- (1) Delivered personally to the permit holder, in which case the revocation shall be effective immediately upon delivery; or
 - (2) Mailed to the permit holder at his last known address by regular mail, postage prepaid, in which case the revocation shall be effective three (3) days after mailing.
- H. An alarm device permit may only be revoked for any one (1) of the following reasons:
- (1) Failure of an alarm device to conform to the operational standards set forth in § 72-3;
 - (2) Failure of a permit holder to pay a false alarm charge assessed to him by the Police Department under the provisions of § 72-5 within thirty (30) days of the mailing to him of a notice of assessment of a false alarm charge;
 - (3) The occurrence of more than fifteen (15) false alarms from an alarm device during any calendar year; or
 - (4) The occurrence of an intentional false alarm caused by the permit holder or by any individual who resides on the premises where the alarm device is located.
- I. A person who has had his burglar/security alarm device permit revoked under § 72-3 may reapply for an alarm device permit forty-five (45) days after the effective date of such revocation; provided, however, that if a person's alarm device permit was revoked for nonpayment of a false alarm charge or for nonpayment of installation fees or both, the Police Department or Fire Commissioner shall deny said application unless such charge or fee, or both, have been paid. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a person who has had his alarm device permit twice revoked on the basis of an intentional false alarm may not reapply for an alarm device permit for one (1) year from the effective date of the second revocation.

§ 72-3. Operational standards.

- A. If an alarm device is designed to transmit a recorded message directly to the Police Department, the duration of such recorded message shall not exceed fifteen (15) seconds. The contents of the recorded message shall be intelligible and in a format approved by the Police Department.
- B. A burglar/security alarm device shall be designed so that a thirty-second delay occurs between the time the alarm device receives a triggering stimulus and the time the alarm device transmits an alarm.
- C. If an alarm device is designed to cause a bell, siren or sound-making device to be activated outside the premises on which the alarm device is installed at the time it gives an alarm, said alarm device shall be designed to deactivate the bell, siren or other sound-making device after five (5) minutes of operation.
- D. All alarm devices shall meet the applicable standards of the Underwriters Laboratories and/or the National Fire Protection Association and/or other recognized industry standards.

The applicant for a permit may be required to submit evidence of the reliability and suitability of the alarm device.

- E. The sensory mechanism used in connection with an alarm device must be adjusted to suppress false indications of fire or intrusion, so that the alarm device will not be activated by impulses due to transient pressure change in water pipes, short flashes of light, power surges, wind noises such as the rattling or vibrating of doors or windows, vehicular noises adjacent to the premises or other forces unrelated to genuine alarm situations.
- F. A permit holder shall provide a repository container (knox box or an approved equal) at the facility site at a location designated by the Fire Commissioner which container shall contain the following information for emergency response personnel:
 - (1) Complete information about the type of system and alarm company contact personnel.
 - (2) An entry key, an alarm panel key and instructions for the alarm panel board.
 - (3) A facility site plan to include the following:
 - (a) The location of storage of hazardous materials.
 - (b) The location of on-site emergency fire-fighting and spill clean-up equipment.
 - (c) A diagram of the sewer system and water system showing fire hydrants, fire hookups and water main locations and sizes.
 - (d) A building floor plan and any other plan deemed necessary by the Fire Commissioner.
- G. An alarm device must be maintained by the permit holder in good repair to assure reliability of operation.
 - (1) Fire alarm system testing is required and records of such testing shall be kept in accordance with the requirements of the BOCA Fire Prevention Code, Chapter 110 of the Borough of Dormont.
 - (2) Representatives of the Police Department or Fire Commissioner shall, periodically and upon 48 hours written notice, have the authority to enter the premises at which an alarm device is located between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays for the purpose of inspecting the alarm device installation in order to determine whether or not it is in accordance with the operation standards set forth in this section. Said representatives may require that repairs be made whenever they have determined that such are necessary to assure proper operation.

§ 72-4. Intentional false alarm.

It shall be unlawful to cause an intentional false alarm.

§ 72-5. False alarm charges.

- A. A permit holder shall pay to the municipality a charge for each false alarm emanating from his alarm device during any calendar year, a fee as more fully established hereafter in Subsection E.
- B. When a false alarm occurs, the Police Department within 10 days from the date of each false alarm, shall notify the permit holder of the alarm device from which the false alarm emanated that a false alarm charge is due and the amount thereof, if any. Such notice shall be in writing and mailed to the permit holder at his last known address by regular mail, postage prepaid. Failure of the Police Department to mail notice of assessment of a false alarm charge within 10 days from the occurrence of a false alarm shall preclude the municipality from assessing a false alarm charge.
- C. A false alarm charge shall be due and payable at the Police Department 30 days from the date of the mailing of the notice of assessment of the false alarm charge.
- D. Failure of a permit holder to pay a false alarm charge on or before the due date shall subject the permit holder to revocation of his alarm device permit under § 72-2 of this chapter.
- E. Fee schedule. **[Amended 4-7-2003 by Ord. No. 1522]**

- (1) The fee and fine schedule for Police Department responses to false alarms shall be as follows:

False Alarms	Fine
1-4	No fine
5-7	\$50.00 per occurrence
8-10	\$75.00 per occurrence
11 and over	\$100.00 per occurrence

- (2) The fee and fine schedule for Fire Department responses to the alarms shall be as follows:

False Alarms	Fine
1	No fine
2-4	\$50.00 per occurrence
5 and over	\$75.00 per occurrence

- (3) Such fines shall be payable to the Borough of Dormont. The fee and fine schedule for false alarms shall be established from time to time by resolution of the Borough Council of the Borough of Dormont.

§ 72-6. Installation fees; exemptions.

- A. Installation fee. The fee for the initial permit for the Dormont Alarm Receiving Center shall be set by the Council. The Council may alter the fee from time to time by resolution adopted at any public meeting of the Council.

- B. Exemption for public agencies. Subsection A shall not apply to buildings owned by the following public agencies and used as herein described:
- (1) Borough of Dormont: buildings used for local government purposes.
 - (2) Keystone Oaks School District: buildings used for public education purposes.
 - (3) Medical Rescue Team South: buildings used for emergency medical purposes.
 - (4) Dormont Public Library: building used for public service purposes.

§ 72-7. Liability.

The issuance of any permit shall not constitute acceptance by the municipality of any liability to maintain any equipment, to answer alarms or for anything in connection therewith.

§ 72-8. Violations and penalties; notification.

- A. Any person, partnership or corporation or any partner or principal officer of any corporation, who or which has violated or permitted the violation of any of the provisions of this chapter shall, upon being found guilty therefore in a proceeding instituted before the District Magistrate having jurisdiction in the Borough of Dormont, pay a fine of not more than \$1,000 plus all court costs, and upon failure of such person or persons to pay any such fine thus imposed, the same shall be imprisoned for a period of 30 days. Each violation of the provisions of this chapter shall constitute a separate violation, and separate proceedings may be brought against any such violator before the District Magistrate. Each day that a violation continues shall constitute a separate violation of the provisions of this chapter. Any such fines collected by the District Magistrate for the violation of this chapter shall be paid over to the Borough of Dormont.
- B. The Police Department shall notify each alarm permit holder of any violation of this chapter and of the penalty ascribed to such violation, and shall notify the alarm permit holder or any other person violating this chapter of the fine imposed hereunder, and of the time and manner in which the same may be paid. In the event that the alarm permit holder, or such other person, shall fail to pay the fine within the time period and in the manner prescribed by the Police Department, the fining entity shall issue a citation before the District Magistrate alleging a violation of the ordinance and the matter shall then proceed in the manner prescribed under the Rules of Criminal Procedure of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

§ 72-9. Alarm system placed out of service.

The Police Department or the Fire Department shall have the option, upon notification to the permit holder and/or monitoring agency, to place an alarm system temporarily out of service if it repeatedly malfunctions to the point of being a burden on the emergency services of the Borough.

