

Chapter 188

ALARM SYSTEMS

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Town Board of the Town of La Pointe 3-10-2009 by Ord. No. 119. Amendments noted where applicable.]

§ 188-1. Declaration of purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to reduce the number of false alarms by eliminating those which are preventable or avoidable and to establish control of the various types of alarm systems that would require police response at the location of an event reported by a signal which is transmitted by telephone or radio or which is otherwise relayed to the emergency communications center by a signal activated by an automated alarm device, including such devices already in use within the Township.

§ 188-2. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

ALARM BUSINESS — Any person, property owner, firm, partnership, corporation, or limited liability company who or which alters, installs, leases, maintains, repairs, replaces or services an alarm system or who or which causes any of these activities to take place.

ALARM SYSTEM — A device or system that emits, transmits or relays a remote or local audible, visual or electronic signal indicating an alarm condition and intended to or reasonably expected to summon police or fire services. "Alarm system" does not include an alarm installed on a vehicle.

ALARM USER — Any person, property owner, firm, partnership, corporation or governmental entity whose premises has an alarm system.

CALENDAR YEAR — The twelve-month period beginning January 1 and ending December 31.

CENTRAL MONITORING STATION — A central location where remote detection devices installed at the premises of an alarm user automatically transmit a signal and the central location is manned 24 hours a day by trained operators who monitor, receive, record, verify, validate or report the signal.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER — The Ashland County Communications Center, which handles the emergency phone calls and radio communications for the Police and Fire Departments.

ENHANCED CALL VERIFICATION — An attempt by the alarm business or its

representative to contact the alarm site, alarm user and/or keyholder by telephone and/or other electronic means, whether or not actual contact with a person is made, to attempt to determine whether an alarm signal is valid before requesting law enforcement to respond to the alarm signal, in an attempt to avoid an unnecessary alarm dispatch request. For purposes of this chapter, telephone and/or other electronic verification shall require, as a minimum, that a second call be made to a different number if the first attempt fails to reach an alarm user or keyholder who can properly identify himself or herself, to attempt to determine whether an alarm signal is valid before requesting law enforcement dispatch.

FALSE ALARM — Any signal, message or other communication transmitted by an alarm system, person or other device which causes Police or Fire Department response in which it is determined by the Police Chief or Fire Chief not to be of an existing emergency or unlawful situation.

FIRE DEPARTMENT — The Town of La Pointe Fire Department, its headquarters and any other location housing publicly owned equipment serving the Fire Department.

KEYHOLDER — A person or persons who will be responsible for responding to the premises of an alarm activation, who have access to the premises and the alarm system and who have the authority and ability to set or deactivate the system.

POLICE DEPARTMENT — The Town of La Pointe Police Department, its headquarters and any other location housing equipment serving the Police Department.

VERIFIED RESPONSE — The alarm business or its representative has verified the legitimacy of an alarm at the scene through independent means such as witness verification, live listening devices or live video monitoring.

§ 188-3. Duties of alarm business.

- A. An alarm business shall meet all regulation and requirements set forth by the Ashland County Communications Center which are not addressed in this chapter.
- B. An alarm business shall keep current records of client information, including but not limited to names of alarm users and keyholders, addresses, phone numbers and other contact information to be used for enhanced call verification and keyholder notification. The alarm business shall provide this information to the Ashland County Communications Center.
- C. An alarm business shall provide written and oral instructions explaining the proper use and operation of the alarm system to each of its alarm users. In addition, an alarm business shall take reasonable steps to educate all alarm users in order to minimize the number of false alarms.
- D. An alarm business or representative shall be responsible for notifying a keyholder for the premises when a request is made for response by the Police Department.
- E. If an alarm user uses an alarm system without the assistance of an alarm business, the alarm user is subject to the same duties as an alarm business.

§ 188-4. Exceptions.

None of the provisions of this chapter shall prevent the Town from providing special alarm monitoring services as may be required because of medical reasons or communicative disorders.

§ 188-5. Prohibited devices.

No person shall use or cause or permit to be used any telephone or electronic device or attachment that automatically selects a public primary telephone trunk line of the Police Department, Fire Department or emergency communications center and then reproduces any prerecorded message to report any unlawful act, fire or other emergency.

§ 188-6. False alarm fee.

- A. Any fees payable to the Town which are delinquent may be assessed against the property involved as a special charge for current service, without notice, pursuant to 66.0627, Wis. Stats.
- B. If the Police Department responds to a false alarm, the alarm user shall pay the Town a fee according to the schedule of fees established by the Town Board.¹
- C. Discontinuance of response.
 - (1) If the Police Department is canceled by the emergency communications center while responding to an alarm, the alarm user may still be assessed a fee for a false alarm.
 - (2) In cases where the alarm user has 12 or more false alarms within a six-month period, the Police Department may suspend response after the Chief of Police or designee sends a written notification to the alarm user. In order to lift the suspension, the alarm user shall submit written confirmation to the Chief of Police or designee that the alarm system has been inspected and repaired, if necessary, and/or additional measures have been taken to reduce the number of false alarms at that location. If the Chief of Police or designee determines that the actions taken are likely to prevent the occurrence of additional false alarms, the Police Department shall lift the suspension.
- D. Exceptions and appeals.
 - (1) A fee shall not be charged if any of the following apply:
 - (a) The alarm was activated by criminal activity or a legitimate emergency.
 - (b) The alarm was activated after a power outage that lasted more than four hours.
 - (c) The alarm was activated after the premises was damaged by weather conditions.

¹. Editor's Note: Amended at time of adoption of Code (see Ch. 1, General Provisions, Art. III).

- (d) The Fire Department has already assessed a fee for the false alarm.
 - (e) The Police Department was canceled prior to arriving at the premises and documentation is provided that enhanced call verification or verified response was properly utilized.
- (2) An alarm user may appeal the assessment of a false alarm fee by submitting written documentation to the Police Chief or designee within 10 business days after notification of the assessment of a fee. The Police Chief or designee must inform the alarm user of the decision in writing. If the alarm user further contests the Police Chief's or designee's decision within 10 days of receiving the decision, the alarm user may seek review by the La Pointe Town Board by submitting a written notification to the La Pointe Town Clerk.

§ 188-7. Violations and penalties.

Any person, alarm user or alarm business that violates any of the provisions of this chapter may be subject to a forfeiture of no more than \$150 for the first offense and no more than \$500 for the second and subsequent offenses. Each day that a violation occurs shall be considered a separate offense.