

CHAPTER 87. ALARMS AND ALARM SYSTEMS

§ 87-1. Definitions.

§ 87-2. Installation and connection approval required.

§ 87-3. Responsibility for activations; owner response; malfunction and corrective action; fees.

§ 87-4. Fire detection devices.

§ 87-5. Disconnection of alarm system.

§ 87-6. Failure to disconnect; unauthorized reconnection.

§ 87-7. Reconnecting of alarm system.

§ 87-8. Appeal.

§ 87-9. Inspections.

§ 87-10. Testing.

§ 87-11. Audible alarm sounding device disconnect.

§ 87-12. Provisions to be retroactive.

§ 87-13. Digital automatic dialing device dialing.

§ 87-14. Installation, service, maintenance or disconnection.

§ 87-15. Lock box requirements.

§ 87-16. Instructions and records.

§ 87-17. Notice of disconnection or change of information required.

§ 87-18. Fees.

§ 87-19. Violations and penalties.

§ 87-20. Repealer.

CHAPTER 87. ALARMS AND ALARM SYSTEMS

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Marple 9-10-2007 by Ord. No. 2007-11. Editor's Note: This ordinance also repealed former Ch. 87, Alarms and Alarm Systems, adopted 4-11-1994 by Ord. No. 94-10, as amended. Amendments noted where applicable.]

GENERAL REFERENCES

Building construction — See Ch. [110](#).

Uniform Construction Code — See Ch. [116](#).

Electrical standards — See Ch. [125](#).

Fire prevention — See Ch. [136](#), Art. I.

Housing — See Ch. [170](#).

§ 87-1. Definitions.

The following words and phrases shall be construed throughout this document to have the meaning herein indicated. In addition, this document acknowledges those definitions listed in NFPA 72.

AFFIDAVIT OF SERVICE/REPAIR

A document used by the Township of Marple to ensure that alarm systems which are tripped for no apparent reason are properly serviced to locate and correct problems in an effort to avoid future false alarms.

ALARM OWNER

Any person, firm, business or corporation of any kind which owns, leases, operates, occupies, manages or in control of the premises wherein an alarm system is installed.

ALARM SYSTEM

Any assembly of equipment, mechanical, electrical or radio-controlled device, which is designed to emit a sound or transmit a signal or message, of an activity requiring the urgent attention of and to which the Township of Marple emergency services are expected to respond.

ALARM USER

Any alarm owner, person or persons in control of an alarm system having been given the authority of the alarm owner to enable or disable, through proper arming and disarming procedures, the system from sending the appropriate signals for which the system was designed.

ALARM VERIFICATION

A feature of automatic fire detection and alarm systems to reduce unwanted alarms wherein devices report alarm conditions for a minimum period of time, or confirm alarm conditions within a given time period after being reset, in order to be accepted as a valid alarm initiation signal.

CENTRAL STATION

A facility designed for the reception of audible and visual electronic signals, digitally coded signals, and telephone signals from burglary, fire, holdup, medical, trouble or other alarm device signals.

CERTIFIED ALARM TECHNICIAN

Any person who inspects, installs, repairs, or performs maintenance on any alarm systems and is currently employed by a company licensed by the Township of Marple.

DEVICE

A component of an alarm system designed for a particular purpose.

DIGITAL AUTOMATIC DIALING DEVICE

A device which is interconnected to a telephone line and is programmed to transmit by a coded signal to the central station.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Acts provided by law enforcement, fire or medical personnel from within Marple Township or those from other communities.

ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL

The Director of Code Enforcement, Fire Marshal, Chief of Police or their designated representative.

ENHANCED VERIFICATION

The attempt by monitoring facilities personnel to verify that no emergency appears to exist at the monitored premises, by means of more thorough procedures such as two or more verification calls, live audio or video, cross zoning, other means or a combination of these procedures.

FALSE ALARM

The activation of any alarm system caused by inadvertence, negligence or unintentional acts to which emergency services are dispatched, including malfunction of the alarm system.

FEE

The assessment of a monetary charge payable to the Township of Marple, authorized pursuant to this chapter.

MAINTENANCE

Work, including, but not limited to, repairs, replacement, and service performed to ensure that

equipment operates properly.

MALFUNCTION

The activation of an alarm system which results in the response of any emergency services caused by mechanical failure, improper installation, lack of proper maintenance, or the reporting of emergency signals caused by acts of nature, the interruption or restoration of electrical power, or any other response for which personnel are unable to gain access to the premises for any reason or are unable to determine the apparent cause of the alarm activation.

MULTIPLE STATION ALARM DEVICE

Two or more single station alarm devices that can be interconnected so that activation of one causes all integral or separate audible sounding devices to operate, or one single station alarm device having connection to other detectors or a manual fire alarm box.

NOTIFICATION APPLIANCE

A fire alarm system device such as a bell, horn, speaker, light, or text display that provides audible, tactile or visual outputs, or any combination thereof.

OWNER

Any person, firm, business or corporation which owns the premises in which an alarm system is installed or the person or persons who lease, operate, occupy or manage the premises.

PREMISES

Any building, structure or combination of buildings and structures which serve as dwelling units, single-family or multifamily, or any other area within a building, structure or combination thereof which is used for any purpose other than residential, wherein an alarm system is installed.

REQUIRED OPERATIVE ALARM SYSTEM

An alarm system which the owner of a premises is required to maintain in an operative condition pursuant to statute, law, ordinance, rule or regulation of any governmental entity.

SERVE

The hand delivery by an enforcement official to the owner or authorized representative who responded to the premises. In the event the owner or authorized representative fails to respond to the premises within 30 minutes, "serve" shall mean placing the form or other matter in the United States mail, postage prepaid, addressed to the owner or authorized representative.

SIGNAL

A status indication communicated by electrical or other means.

TROUBLE SIGNAL

A signal initiated by an alarm system or device indicative of a fault in a monitored circuit device.

UPGRADED

Replacing or adding a control panel or box.

VOICE AUTOMATIC DIALING DEVICE

A device which is interconnected to a telephone line and is programmed to transmit by voice message, including voice synthesis, to the central station.

§ 87-2. Installation and connection approval required.

A. Before any person is permitted to install, own, lease, possess, operate and/or connect with a central station any alarm system within the Township of Marple, written approval for such must be obtained from an enforcement official of the Township of Marple. It shall be the responsibility of the company which is installing an alarm system to provide the owner with a copy of the most current Township of Marple alarm system permit application and ordinance. The alarm system permit application shall be completed by the owner and forwarded to the Enforcement Official prior to the system being activated.

B. Permit application.

(1) The permit application shall include the following information:

(a) The name(s), address, and business and home telephone numbers of the owner, lessee, operator, manager or person in possession of the premises wherein the alarm system is installed.

(b) The name, address and telephone number of a minimum of three persons who can be notified by the Enforcement Official in the event of the activation of the alarm system, who shall be capable of responding to the premises within 30 minutes from initial notification of alarm, and who is authorized to enter the premises to ascertain the status thereof.

(c) The date of activation of the alarm system.

(d) The name, address and telephone number of the installing company.

(2) When any of the information required in Subsection [B\(1\)\(a\)](#) or [\(b\)](#) of this section has changed, it shall be reported to the enforcement official by the alarm owner within 15 days of such change.

§ 87-3. Responsibility for activations; owner response; malfunction and corrective action; fees.

A. Other than as provided in Subsection [B](#) of this section, the responsibility for an alarm activation shall be that of the alarm owner. A response to an alarm activation shall result when any member of the emergency services is dispatched to the premises where the alarm has been activated. After responding to an alarm activation, the member of the emergency services shall cause to be notified any person identified on the permit of the alarm system that was activated. The notified person shall thereupon travel to the premises to ascertain the status of the premises. Should such person fail to appear at the premises within 30 minutes after being notified to do so, the Township shall charge the owner of the premises a fee set forth in [§ 87-18](#) of this chapter.

B. The responsibility for an alarm activation, resulting in any member of the emergency services being dispatched, caused by a certified alarm technician shall be that of the certified alarm technician.

C. In the event emergency services are dispatched to an alarm malfunction, the alarm owner shall be served an affidavit of service/repair. The affidavit of service/repair shall be filled out and signed by the certified alarm technician who responded to the call for service/repair and who actually inspected, repaired or performed maintenance to the alarm system.

(1) The signed affidavit of service/repair shall be completely filled out and returned to the Township of Marple Police Department within 15 calendar days.

(2) Failure to return the completely filled out affidavit of service/repair within the required time period above

will cause a fee set forth in § [87-18](#) to be assessed.

D. False alarms and alarm malfunctions triggered by any components connected to the alarm system upon which emergency services are dispatched shall be counted in computing the total number of false alarms for purposes of this chapter.

E. If there is reason to believe that an alarm system is not maintained in a manner that insures proper operation and suppresses false alarms or alarm malfunctions, the Alarm Enforcement Official may require a conference with the Township Public Safety Committee, the alarm permit holder, and the individual or association responsible for maintenance of the alarm system to review circumstances of each false alarm or alarm malfunction.

F. Once a false alarm or alarm malfunction has been transmitted, it shall be unlawful for the alarm panel to be reset by the owner of the premises, or his designee, until the authorization of a member of the responding emergency services has been obtained.

G. Should any fee assessed pursuant to this chapter remain unpaid in excess of 120 days from the date the fee is invoiced, a collection fee, set forth under § [87-18](#), for the outstanding balance shall be assessed and shall be payable by the owner of the premises in addition to the original fee. The owner shall also be responsible for any legal fees or costs incurred by the Township of Marple in enforcement of this chapter.

H. No fee shall be assessed for the first false alarm within any ninety-day period. In the event a subsequent false alarm is received, a fee, set forth under § [87-18](#), will be assessed and shall be paid by the alarm owner.

§ 87-4. Fire detection devices.

Any alarm system having a fire alarm device, installed after the adoption of and in accordance with this chapter, shall have fire alarm verification. This feature shall also be included on any system which is being upgraded or on any system which fails to be repaired after three system malfunctions as defined in this chapter.

§ 87-5. Disconnection of alarm system.

A. Except for premises protected by a required operative alarm system, the Enforcement Official of the Township of Marple is authorized to order the disconnecting or deactivation of any alarm system, by written notice to the alarm owner of premises wherein an alarm system is installed, for any of the following reasons:

- (1) Failure to meet all requirements or pay the fees provided for in this chapter within 15 days of the charging of the fee; or
- (2) Failure of the owner to provide a written affidavit of service/repair required by this chapter; or
- (3) A false alarm or alarm malfunction (either fire or burglar) at a premises for which a fee is charged pursuant to this chapter is the result of the failure of the alarm owner to take corrective action to eliminate the cause of the false alarm; or
- (4) The failure of any person notified pursuant to this chapter to appear within 30 minutes after being notified to respond, if such failure to timely appear occurs three or more times within a calendar year.

B. The owner may appeal the order of the Enforcement Official pursuant to § [87-8](#).

§ 87-6. Failure to disconnect; unauthorized reconnection.

It shall be unlawful for any person to fail to have disconnected or deactivated an alarm system which has been ordered disconnected or deactivated pursuant to § [87-5](#), including those situations in which the Township Enforcement Official affirmed the order to disconnect or deactivate, and it shall be unlawful for any person to reconnect an alarm system which has been disconnected or deactivated pursuant to the order of the Enforcement Official unless the reconnecting of the system is authorized pursuant to § [87-7](#). Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be subject to penalties provided for, the penalty being cumulative to other administrative remedies provided for in this chapter.

§ 87-7. Reconnecting of alarm system.

An order to disconnect or deactivate an alarm system may be rescinded by the Enforcement Official upon the finding that the alarm owner of the premises has taken corrective action which it is reasonable to conclude will remedy the cause of the false alarms or alarm malfunctions at the premises. In making a request for such a rescission, the owner shall have the burden to show what corrective action has been taken and that same is sufficient to support a finding that the cause of the false alarms or alarm malfunctions has been remedied. The Enforcement Official shall have the right to inspect the system and test the system prior to rescinding the order to disconnect or deactivate. Before any reconnecting of a system, after the order to disconnect, a reconnect fee shall be assessed as set forth in § [87-18](#). The Enforcement Official shall not rescind an order to disconnect or deactivate if the owner has failed to pay any fee charged the owner pursuant to this chapter.

§ 87-8. Appeal.

An alarm owner to whom a notice to disconnect or deactivate an alarm system has been mailed, pursuant to § [87-5](#), shall be entitled to appeal the order of the Enforcement Official to the Township Public Safety Committee. An appeal must be in writing, stating the reasons why the order to disconnect or deactivate should be withdrawn, made within 15 days of the date of the notice and delivered to the Township office. The Township Public Safety Committee shall review the facts and circumstances and shall determine whether the owner has shown good cause why the order should be withdrawn. The Township Public Safety Committee shall notify the owner of the decision in writing. If the Township Public Safety Committee affirms the order to disconnect or deactivate a system, the owner shall have five days following mailing of the written decision of the Township Public Safety Committee within which to comply with the order. The appeal of an order to disconnect or deactivate shall suspend the effective date of the order until the appeal has been acted upon by the Township Public Safety Committee.

§ 87-9. Inspections.

For the purpose of enforcing this chapter and as a condition to installing and maintaining an alarm or warning system, the alarm owner thereof shall execute a consent, in such a form as may be prescribed by the Enforcement Official, which will authorize the Enforcement Official and/or his designate to enter upon an owner's premises, at such reasonable times and upon reasonable notice, to inspect the installation and operation of the system.

§ 87-10. Testing.

No alarm owner shall allow any test or demonstration of an alarm system without first ensuring that the dispatch of emergency services will not occur.

§ 87-11. Audible alarm sounding device disconnect.

All alarm system owners using an audible alarm sounding device, other than notification appliances for fire, shall equip such system with a timing mechanism that will disengage the device after a maximum period of 15 minutes. Such audible alarm sounding device must remain disconnected until it can be manually reset. It is the specific intent of this section to prevent an audible alarm sounding device from automatically resetting.

§ 87-12. Provisions to be retroactive.

The provisions of the ordinance shall apply to all alarm systems irrespective of when such system shall have been installed. It is the specific purpose of this paragraph to give this chapter retroactive effect.

§ 87-13. Digital automatic dialing device dialing.

All alarm owners desiring a central station to receive any signal from a digital automatic dialing device shall have such device programmed to dial only those numbers authorized by the central station.

§ 87-14. Installation, service, maintenance or disconnection.

Installation, service and maintenance of an alarm system in a single-family dwelling may be done by either the alarm owner or a certified alarm technician. Once installed, the alarm system can only be disconnected by a certified alarm technician. Installation, service, maintenance or disconnection of all other alarm systems shall be done by a certified alarm technician.

§ 87-15. Lock box requirements.

A. Alarm owners, other than single- or two-family dwellings, installing a fire alarm system shall install a lock box at the premises being protected.

B. Existing facilities with a fire alarm, other than single- or two-family dwellings, shall install a lock box within 12 months of the date of adoption of this chapter.

C. The lock box shall be installed as follows:

(1) At a location approved by the Enforcement Official;

- (2) At a height approximately eight feet above grade; and
- (3) To the right side of the main entrance door(s) facing the public roadway.

§ 87-16. Instructions and records.

Every alarm owner shall be responsible to provide information to enable all alarm users and contacts listed on the alarm permit, access to operate the alarm system properly and to locate and obtain immediate service/maintenance for the alarm system. Alarm owners shall cause to be performed perpetual maintenance and shall keep all service/maintenance records and the affidavit of service/repair pertaining to the alarm system, documenting all service/maintenance performed on the alarm system, for a period of not less than three years.

§ 87-17. Notice of disconnection or change of information required.

Every alarm owner using an alarm system located within the Township of Marple shall notify the Enforcement Official in writing if the alarm system is disconnected, or any of the necessary information filed on the original permit has changed, i.e. persons to be contacted, alarm company, type of alarm, etc.

§ 87-18. Fees.

Chapter Section	Action	Fee
87-3A	Failure to respond within 30 minutes	\$75
87-3C(2)	Affidavit of service/repair not returned	\$500
87-3G	Collection fee	35%
87-3H	First false alarm within 90-day period	No fee
	First through third subsequent false alarms	\$100
	Fourth and above subsequent false alarms	\$200
87-7	Reconnect fee	\$25

§ 87-19. Violations and penalties.

Certified alarm technicians violating any provisions of § [87-3B](#) of this chapter shall, upon conviction before a Magisterial District Justice, be subject to pay a fine of \$100. Any alarm owner or alarm user violating any provision of the chapter shall be guilty of a violation of the chapter and shall, upon conviction before a Magisterial District Justice, be subject to pay a fine of \$100 for the first offense, \$200 for the second offense, and \$300 for each succeeding offense, and each daily occurrence of the same offense shall be considered as a new offense and finable as such, together with costs, and in default of payment of said fine and costs, such alarm user may be committed to the Delaware County Prison for any period of not exceeding 30 days, at the discretion of said Magisterial District Justice.

§ 87-20. Repealer.

Any ordinance or part of an ordinance to the extent it is inconsistent herewith is hereby repealed.

For more information on Lock Boxes, go to **<http://www.broomallfirecompany.com/knoxbox.htm>**.

For Alarm Permit applications, please contact Mr. Michael Barbiers at (610)356-1500, extension 694 or by email: mbarbiers@marplepolice.com.