

**ORDINANCE NO. 607**

**AN ORDINANCE REGULATING ALARM SYSTEMS  
IN THE BOROUGH OF FOX CHAPEL**

**SECTION 1. PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY**

(A) The purpose of this Ordinance is to require Alarm Users and Alarm Companies to properly use and maintain the operational effectiveness and proper utilization of Alarm Systems and to reduce or eliminate False Alarms which unduly divert law enforcement personnel from necessary functions including responding to criminal activity and which place an undue burden on fire personnel and resources.

(B) This Ordinance governs systems intended to summon law enforcement and fire department personnel, establishes criteria for such systems, provides for licensing of alarm companies and establishes penalties for violations.

(C) This Ordinance shall apply to all Alarm Systems, including Local Alarm Systems, currently or hereinafter installed in the Borough of Fox Chapel.

**SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS**

(A) **Alarm Company** means a Person who/which is in the business of selling, leasing, maintaining, servicing, repairing, altering, replacing, moving, installing or Monitoring an Alarm System in an Alarm Site.

(B) **Alarm Dispatch Request** means a notification to a law enforcement or fire department agency or Dispatching Agency that an alarm, either manual or automatic, has been activated at a particular Alarm Site.

(C) **Alarm Site** means a single-fixed premises or location served by an Alarm System or systems. Each tenancy, if served by a separate Alarm System in a multi-tenant building or complex, shall be considered a separate Alarm Site.

(D) **Alarm System** means a device or series of devices, including, but not limited to, systems interconnected with a radio frequency method such as cellular or private radio signals, which emit or transmit a remote or local audible, visual or electronic signal indicating an alarm condition and intended to summon law enforcement or fire department services of the Borough, including Local Alarm System. Alarm System does not include an alarm installed on a vehicle or Person unless the vehicle or personal alarm is permanently located at a site.

(E) **Alarm User** means any Person, firm, partnership, corporation or other entity who (which) owns, uses or is in control of any Alarm System at its Alarm Site.

(F) **Borough** means Borough of Fox Chapel.

- (G) **Cancellation or Responding Agency Alarm Dispatch Cancellation** is the process by which an Alarm Company providing Monitoring verifies with the Alarm User or his/her representative or other responsible party that a false dispatch has occurred and that there is not an existing situation at the Alarm Site requiring law enforcement or fire department agency response.
- (H) **Dispatching Agency** means an entity designated by the Borough to receive notification of alarms from an Alarm Company.
- (I) **Duress Alarm** means a silent Alarm System signal generated by the manual activation of a device intended to signal a life-threatening situation or a crime in progress requiring law enforcement response.
- (J) **False Alarm** means an Alarm Dispatch Request to a law enforcement or fire department agency when the responding personnel find no evidence of a criminal offense, attempted criminal offense or fire after having completed a timely investigation of the Alarm Site.
- (K) **Fire Detecting Device** means a device which automatically detects heat, smoke or other products of combustion and activates an alarm upon any such detection.
- (L) **License** means a license issued by the Borough to an Alarm Company to sell, install, monitor, repair, or replace Alarm Systems in the Borough of Fox Chapel.
- (M) **Local Alarm System** means any Alarm System that annunciates an alarm by an internal or external device at the Alarm Site only (i.e., is not connected directly or indirectly to an Alarm Company). Local Alarm System does NOT include individual, battery-operated smoke detectors (e.g., FirstAlert™).
- (N) **Monitoring** means the process by which an Alarm Company receives signals from an Alarm System and relays an Alarm Dispatch Request to the Borough's Dispatching Agency for the purpose of summoning a law enforcement or fire department response to the Alarm Site.
- (O) **One Plus Duress Alarm** means the capacity of an Alarm System to accept manual activation of a silent alarm signal by entering at a keypad a code that adds one to the last digit of the normal arm/disarm code (If Normal Code = 1234, then One Plus Duress Code = 1235)
- (P) **Panic** means an audible Alarm System signal generated by the manual activation of a device intended to signal a life threatening or emergency situation requiring law enforcement response.
- (Q) **Person** means an individual, corporation, partnership, association, organization or similar entity.

(R) **Verify** means an attempt by the Alarm Company or its representative to contact the Alarm Site by telephonic or other electronic means, whether or not actual contact with a Person is made, before requesting law enforcement or fire department dispatch, in an attempt to avoid an unnecessary Alarm Dispatch Request.

### **SECTION 3. ALARM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS**

(A) Any construction hereinafter undertaken requiring a building permit shall have one or more Fire Detecting Devices installed in accordance with the Borough's Building Code. All Fire Detecting Devices shall be maintained in an operative condition at all times other than when they are being serviced or tested.

(B) An Alarm System **MUST** have one or more audible interior alarms that can be clearly heard throughout the Alarm Site but shall not be so loud as to cause a nuisance beyond the property line. Whenever reasonably possible in existing Alarm Systems and in all new Alarm Systems, audible alarm shall be programmed to sound for no longer than ten (10) minutes after being activated and shall not reactivate until the Alarm System has been reset by the Alarm User or his/her representative. The requirement to have an audible alarm shall not apply to Duress Alarms.

(C) There shall be no audible exterior alarms on any Alarm System or Local Alarm System, all exterior alarms to be limited to light only. All Alarm Systems installed after the effective date of this Ordinance may have an external alarm light. All alarm systems existing as of the effective date of this Ordinance having an external audible alarm **MUST** disconnect the external audible alarm or convert the external audible alarm to an alarm light by the effective date of this Ordinance.

### **SECTION 4. ALARM COMPANY LICENSE**

(A) Alarm Companies must be licensed by the Borough in order to provide alarm services in the Borough or to Borough residents. The Borough Manager may suspend or revoke the License of an Alarm Company for failing to comply with the requirements set forth in this Ordinance.

(B) Applications for License shall be made on such forms and contain such information as is required by the Borough to demonstrate compliance with this Ordinance. The License will be valid for a period of one (1) year unless revoked earlier. The application will be accompanied by such fee as may be determined by Council. A list of the Alarm Sites in the Borough maintained by the Alarm Company shall accompany each application for a License or License renewal. Such listing shall be sorted by street address.

### **SECTION 5. DUTIES OF ALARM COMPANY**

(A) Upon enactment of this Ordinance, Alarm Companies shall not program Alarm Systems so that they are capable of sending One Plus Duress Alarms. Alarm Companies may continue to report One Plus Duress Alarms received from Alarm Systems programmed with One Plus Duress prior to enactment of this Ordinance.

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- (B) Upon enactment of this Ordinance, Alarm Companies shall not install a device activating a panic or duress alarm that is a single-action, non-recessed button.
- (C) Upon enactment of this Ordinance, Alarm Companies must use control panels tested for conformance to the Security Industry Association (SIA) Control Panel Standard – Features for False Alarm Reduction for all new systems and for all replacement systems.
- (D) Alarm Companies shall maintain customer databases for all customers in the Borough and all adjoining municipalities that correctly reflect the municipality in which each Alarm Site is located, and shall assure that an Alarm Site is in the Borough before issuing an Alarm Dispatch Request to a Borough agency or Dispatching Agency. Failure to do so shall result in the automatic revocation of the Alarm Company's License to operate in the Borough.
- (E) An Alarm Company performing Monitoring services shall:
- (1) offer a training period for Alarm Users;
  - (2) report alarm signals to the Dispatching Agency by using telephone numbers designated by the Dispatching Agency;
  - (3) attempt to Verify *every* alarm signal, except a Duress or Panic Alarm activation, BEFORE requesting a law enforcement or fire department response to an Alarm System signal;
  - (4) communicate Alarm Dispatch Requests to the Dispatching Agency in a manner and form determined by the Dispatching Agency;
  - (5) communicate Cancellations to the Dispatching Agency designated by the Borough in a manner and form determined by the Borough and/or the Dispatching Agency;
  - (6) ensure that all Alarm Users of Alarm Systems equipped with a Duress or Panic Alarm are given adequate training as to the proper use of the Duress or Panic Alarm;
  - (7) communicate any available information (north, south, front, back, floor, etc.) about the location of any alarm;
  - (8) communicate type of alarm activation (fire or security, silent or audible, interior or perimeter);
  - (9) upon enactment of this Ordinance, Alarm Companies that perform Monitoring services must maintain records relating to each Alarm Dispatch Request for a rolling twelve (12) month period as long as the License remains in effect. Records must include the name, address and phone number of the Alarm User, the Alarm System Zone(s) activated, the time of Alarm Dispatch Request and evidence of an attempt to Verify. The Borough may request copies of such records for individually-named Alarm Users.

**SECTION 6. FINES**

(A) An Alarm User shall be subject to a civil citation and a fine of up to \$1,000 for failing to meet the requirements of Section 3 of this Ordinance. After official notification by the Borough that the Alarm System does not comply with Section 3 of this Ordinance, each subsequent day that the system fails to meet the requirements of Section 3 of the Ordinance shall be considered a separate offense.

(B) An Alarm User shall be subject to a civil citation and a fine of up to \$300 for each False Alarm in excess of three (3) during any 12-month period. The Borough MAY waive or reduce the fine if the Alarm User can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Borough that he/she is attempting to eliminate/correct the cause of the false alarms.

(C) If Cancellation occurs prior to law enforcement personnel arriving at the scene or prior to fire department personnel being dispatched, this shall not be counted as a False Alarm for the purpose of fines and no fines will be assessed.

(D) An Alarm Company may be issued a civil citation and fined up to \$1,000 if the personnel responding to the False Alarm determine that an employee of the Alarm Company caused the False Alarm. In this situation, the False Alarm will not be counted against the Alarm User.

(E) An Alarm Company may be issued a civil citation and fined up to \$1,000 and have its License revoked for failure to Verify prior to Dispatching if the Borough determines the existence of a consistent pattern or policy against verification.

(F) An Alarm Company may be issued a civil citation and fined up to \$1000 and have its license to operate in the Borough revoked if the Borough determines the existence of a consistent pattern of the Alarm Company notifying the Dispatching Agency of an alarm at an Alarm Site reported to be in the Borough that is actually located in another municipality.

(G) An Alarm Company may be issued a civil citation and fined up to \$1,000 and have its License revoked if the Borough determines that an Alarm Company employee made a false statement concerning the inspection of an Alarm Site or the performance of an Alarm System.

(H) An Alarm Company may be issued a civil citation and fined up to \$1,000 if it installs an Alarm System without a valid License.

(I) Any Person may be issued a civil citation and fined up to \$1,000 for any other violation of this Ordinance.

**SECTION 7. REPEALER**

Ordinance Nos. 460 and 485 are hereby revoked in their entirety.

**SECTION 8. EFFECTIVE DATE**

Except where otherwise specifically stated herein, this Ordinance shall become effective on January 1, 2000.

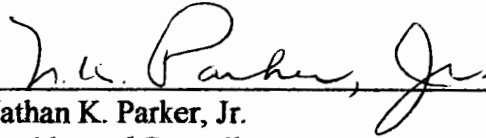
ORDAINED AND ENACTED this 20<sup>th</sup> day of September, 1999.

ATTEST:

BOROUGH OF FOX CHAPEL

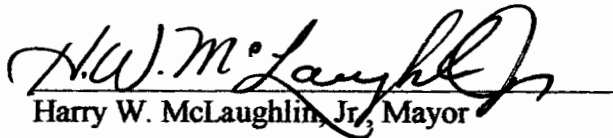


Dana A. Abate  
Dana A. Abate  
Borough Secretary



Nathan K. Parker, Jr.  
Nathan K. Parker, Jr.  
President of Council

EXAMINED AND APPROVED by me this 21<sup>st</sup> day of September, 1999.



Harry W. McLaughlin, Jr.  
Harry W. McLaughlin, Jr., Mayor