

Chapter 140. Alarm Systems

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford 5-27-1997 by Ord. No. 97-10^[1] (Ch. 55 of the 1992 Code). Amendments noted where applicable.]

GENERAL REFERENCES

Noise — See Ch. 290.

[1] *Editor's Note: This ordinance also provided for the repeal of original Ch. 55, Alarm Systems, adopted 9-28-1976 by Ord. No. 76-41, as amended.*

§ 140-1. Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide standards and regulations for various types of local alarms of intrusion, burglar, fire, medical emergency and other emergency alarm devices, whether by direct line, radio, telephone or some other means of actuating a device at police headquarters of the Township of Cranford and requiring response thereto by the Police Department, Fire Department or other municipal agencies.

§ 140-2. Applicability.

- A. The provisions of this chapter shall apply to any person who operates, maintains or owns any alarm device or local alarm designed to summon the Police or Fire Department or other municipal agency to any location in response to any type of alarm signal.
- B. The terms of this chapter shall in no way prohibit alarm companies from providing service by private source to other offices within or without the Township, so long as such activity is not connected to the alarm console; except, however, that any person having a premises protected by an alarm device shall still be responsible for the registration thereof in accordance with §§ 140-5 and 140-7 hereof.

§ 140-3. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

ALARM CONSOLE

The console or control panel of the devices giving visual and/or audio response located within the Police Department of the Township of Cranford.

ALARM DEVICE

Any system installed to serve an improved property and designed or used for detection of fire, smoke or similar hazards, the detection of unauthorized entry, the commission of an unlawful act or the detection of any one or more of the foregoing, which system actuates equipment in the alarm console providing warning of intrusion, fire, smoke, flood, medical emergency or other peril and automatically alerts a person beyond the limits of the property who is engaged in the business of relaying information by human or mechanical means to the Township Police or Fire Department.

DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE

A representative designated by the Township.

FALSE ALARM

Any alarm device actuated by inadvertence, negligence or intentional or unintentional act of someone other than an intruder, and shall include as well alarms caused by the malfunctioning of the alarm device or other relevant equipment.

[Amended 4-21-2015 by Ord. No. 2015-15]

LOCAL ALARM

Any alarm or device which, when actuated, produces a signal not connected to the Township alarm console.

MONITORED ALARM

That type of device using telephone lines transmitting an alarm directly to a Township alarm monitoring system.

PERMITTEE

Any person owning an alarm device or a local alarm within the scope of this chapter.

PERSON

Includes any natural person, partnership, corporation, association or any other legal entity.

§ 140-4. Alarm console.

- A. Establishment. There is hereby established a Police Department alarm console as the exclusive means of transmitting alarms to the Cranford Police Department.
- B. Connection.
 - (1) Previously connected alarms. All alarms in operation and connected to the alarm panel board located in police headquarters as of the date of the adoption of this chapter (except dial alarms) shall be connected by or at the direction of the Cranford Police Department to the alarm console by the permittee.^[1]

[1] *Editor's Note: Amended at time of adoption of Code (see Ch. 1, General Provisions, Art. II).*
 - (2) New alarm connections. Any connection to the police alarm console shall be of a type inspected and approved by the Chief of Police or his designated representative, and any person aggrieved by said decision may appeal said decision in writing within 10 days to the Township Administrator of the Township of Cranford, who is hereby designated the hearing officer for such appeals.

§ 140-5. Use of alarm devices and dial alarms.

- A. No person shall install, maintain, use, cause or permit to be used, or transfer any alarm device or dial alarm within the Township of Cranford unless a permit therefor has been issued by the Chief of Police of the Township in accordance with the provisions of this section.
- B. Every person or business entity who or which owns or operates an alarm device shall make an annual application for the registration thereof by completing a form for this purpose which is available at the Cranford Police Department. Each registration shall be completed by an authorized representative of the alarm device owner, with the initial fee paid at time of registration.
- C. All persons and business entities engaging in an alarm business in the Township of Cranford shall annually furnish a complete current list of the names and addresses of all persons and businesses in the Township to which or for which alarm devices have been installed or which are under contract to the alarm business for services. Such lists shall be delivered to the Cranford Police Department on or before January 1 of each succeeding year.
- D. Upon notification by the Cranford Police Department that an alarm has been activated, the owner or designated representative of the premises from which the alarm signal has been received shall respond to

that location. Noncompliance with this provision may result in notification by the Township to the premises owner of discontinuance of response to future alarms from the subject premises.

- E. A dial alarm is any alarm device which, when activated, automatically or electronically selects a telephone line connected to a central alarm station or to police headquarters, reporting a prerecorded message, requesting police assistance. All persons or business entities having such systems shall have until the end of calendar year 1997 to make alternate arrangements for private monitoring. Thereafter, dial alarm systems will no longer be accepted as alarm devices within the Township of Cranford for purposes of response.
- F. All audible alarms shall be equipped with a time relay or battery to limit the sounding of an alarm to 15 minutes or less.
- G. The chapter does not apply to a motor vehicle security alarm system. If such a system, however, employs a signal designed to activate an audible or visual alarm on or within the premises of the Township of Cranford, it shall be subject to the provisions of this chapter.

§ 140-6. False alarms.

- A. Any person having knowledge of a false alarm shall immediately notify the Police Department that such alarm has been activated without the existence of a real emergency situation.
[Amended 4-21-2015 by Ord. No. 2015-15]
- B. The Cranford Police Department shall investigate each false alarm and shall maintain records of each such event on file.
- C. Fees for false alarms.
[Amended 4-26-2011 by Ord. No. 2011-12]
 - (1) Residents or commercial establishments that exceed three false alarms in a calendar year will be charged a fee for each additional false alarm as follows:
 - (a) Four to five false alarms: \$15 per occurrence.
 - (b) Six to 10 false alarms: \$25 per occurrence.
 - (c) Eleven to 15 false alarms: \$50 per occurrence.
 - (d) Sixteen or more false alarms: \$100 per occurrence.
 - (2) For the first three false alarms in any year, there is no charge. All such fees shall be billed to the owner of the premises on a monthly basis, with payment due to the Township of Cranford within 30 days of the date of invoice. Failure to remit the required false alarm fees shall result in a lien being placed by the Township of Cranford on the subject premises and penalties as outlined in § 140-9.
[Amended 4-21-2015 by Ord. No. 2015-15]

§ 140-7. Fees.

- A. Nonmonitored alarms. Each audible or other alarm not connected to the Township alarm console shall be subject to an annual registration fee of \$40 and an annual renewal fee of \$25. The registration and fees are nontransferable from homeowner to homeowner.
[Amended 11-25-2003 by Ord. No. 2003-41; 4-26-2011 by Ord. No. 2011-12]
- B. Monitored alarms. Each alarm connected to the Township alarm console monitoring system shall pay annual monitoring fees as follows, including registration:
[Amended 11-25-2003 by Ord. No. 2003-41]
 - (1) Residential: \$95 per unit.
 - (2) Nonresidential:

- (a) Common area: \$200.
 - (b) Per individual unit: \$200.
 - (c) The above fees are assessed for each individual connection line.
- C. Exceptions. All facilities of the Township of Cranford and the Board of Education of the Township of Cranford shall have the right to have an unlimited number of alarm devices and connected to the console pursuant to this subsection and monitored without the payment of fees.
- D. Fee payment requirements. All fees due the Township of Cranford pursuant to the provisions of this chapter shall be paid on or before December 15 of the preceding year. Any payment not received by January 31 of the subject year shall have a late fee of \$50 assessed. Thereafter, the owner of any registered alarm for which the late fee has not been paid shall be notified, by certified mail and first-class mail simultaneously, of the potential to be disconnected. However, absent instruction by the owner or owner designee in writing to disconnect the alarm, it will continue to be monitored and the fees shall be assessed as a lien against the subject premises.
- [Amended 4-21-2015 by Ord. No. 2015-15]

§ 140-8. Rule-making authority.

The Cranford Police Department shall prepare all documents, rules and regulations as required to implement the provisions of this chapter in order to provide for efficient recordkeeping and management of the provisions of this chapter. The Township Committee shall adopt all such rules and regulations by resolution.

§ 140-9. Violations and penalties.

Any person or business entity violating any provision of this chapter shall be subject to a penalty as provided in Chapter 1, Article I, of this Code. All complaints alleging violations shall be heard in the Cranford Municipal Court.

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

§ 140-10. Indemnification of Township.

All persons or business entities which own, install, maintain, use or otherwise rely upon alarm devices subject to the provisions of this chapter, whether monitored or nonmonitored as provided herein, shall indemnify and hold harmless the Township of Cranford for any and all claims, damages, causes of action for damages and attorney fees, including the reasonable costs of investigation and defending such claims, which arise out of any suits, actions or judgments which may be entered therein, brought for damages or alleged damages resulting from injury to any person and/or property or loss of life.