Sec. 10-72. False alarms.

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

(1) *Alarm system* means any mechanical or electrical device which is designed or used for the detection of burglars, intruders, robbery, theft, fire, security breach, need for medical assistance, or hazard, collectively referred to as emergencies herein, within a building, structure, facility, or for alerting others to the commission of an unlawful act or hazard within a building, structure or facility, or both, and which emits a sound, light, signal, or transmits a signal or message when activated, including but not limited to direct dial telephone devices, and burglar alarms. Alarm system does not include those devices which are used only to alert or signal persons within the premises in which the devices are located of an emergency, and which do not transmit when activated an electronic, telephonic or other signal to a location other than the premises in which the devices are located.

(2) *False alarm signal* means the activation of an alarm system when there is no emergency through mechanical failure, malfunction, improper design, installation or utilization, vice or defect of an alarm system, or negligence of the owner, his employees or agents, and which results in response or attempted response by public law enforcement, fire, safety, or emergency medical personnel.

(3) *Owner* means any person who owns the property protected or serviced by an alarm system or upon which an alarm system is located. Owner shall also include a lessee or occupant of the property referred to above who has responsibility for the alarm system located upon such property, or who owns, leases or has installed the alarm system, or on whose request the alarm system has been installed.

(b) *Alarm system operating requirements.* An alarm system shall be adjusted to suppress false indications due to:

(1) Transient changes in water pipe pressure;

(2) Flashes of light;

(3) Wind noise caused by rattling or vibration of windows, doors, or walls;

(4) Vehicular noise;

(5) Electrical power fluctuations; and

(6) Other forces or factors unrelated to an actual emergency.

It shall be the responsibility of the owner to provide a list of at least two (2) persons capable of responding to an alarm activation that can arrive on site within twenty-five (25) minutes.

(c) *Penalties for false fire, fire related alarms.* The owner shall be penalized for false fire or fire related alarm signals as follows:

(1) First three (3) false alarm signals during any period of twelve (12) consecutive monthsNo penalty

(2) Fourth false alarm signal during any period of twelve (12) consecutive months$100.00

(3) Fifth false alarm signal during any period of twelve (12) consecutive months$200.00

(4) Sixth or subsequent false alarm signals during any period of twelve (12) consecutive months$300.00

It shall be the responsibility of the fire chief, or his designee, to monitor all incoming false alarm signals and issue, or cause to be issued, an invoice to the owner of the property upon which the false alarm has been activated, imposing payment based on fine schedule listed above.

All funds derived from the penalties listed in the above sub-section shall be allocated to the fire hazard pay fund of the Natchitoches Fire Department.

(d) *Penalties for other false alarms.* The owner shall be responsible for payment of the following penalties for false alarm signals other than fire or fire related false alarm signals:

(1) First two (2) false alarm signals during any consecutive thirty-day periodNo penalty

(2) Third false alarm signal during any consecutive thirty-day period$50.00

(3) Fourth or any subsequent false alarm signal during any consecutive thirty-day period$100.00

(4) Eighth or any subsequent false alarm signal during any twelve (12) consecutive month period$200.00

It shall be the responsibility of the chief of police, or his designee, to monitor all incoming false alarm signals and issue, or cause to be issued, an invoice to the owner of the property upon which the false alarm has been activated, imposing payment based on fine schedule listed above.

All funds derived from the penalties listed in this subsection shall be allocated to the sales tax fund of the Natchitoches Police Department.

(e) *Exemptions from this section.* Alarm signals proved by the owner to be the result of malicious acts of persons not under the control of the owner shall not be considered false alarms.

Beginning with the date of alarm activation or alarm conversion/takeover, there shall be a thirty-day grace period. During the thirty-day grace period, false alarms will not be counted as an occurrence toward the total of maximum false alarm signals, nor will the alarm user be subject to any penalty, as provided for in this section.

(f) *Citation.* Failure to pay any invoice issued under this section, may result in the issuance of a citation by the Natchitoches City Police department for recovery of any fines issued in accordance with this section, together with the payment of any court costs that may result in the prosecution of any such fine.

(Ord. No. 008-2011, 4-11-2011)

Cross reference(s)—Fire department, § 13-35 et seq.