

TOWN OF BURRILLVILLE

Office of Town Clerk

Louise R. Phaneuf

Town Clerk



TOWN BUILDING
HARRISVILLE, R.I.

Telephone: (401) 568-4300 ext. 114

FAX: (401) 568-0490

E-mail: townclerk@burrillville.org

RI Relay 1-800-745-5555 (TTY)

The Town Council of the Town of Burrillville hereby ordains as follows:

The Revised General Ordinances, Town of Burrillville, RI, 2004, Chapter 16 entitled *Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions*, is hereby amended by adding the following:

Article IV. Alarm Systems

Sec. 16-91. Purpose.

The purpose of this ordinance is to set standards for the use of alarm systems in the Town of Burrillville, to protect the police and other emergency services from misuse, and to protect the health, welfare, and safety of the general public. This chapter is intended to ease the potential of a police officer or citizen being injured during responses to false alarms as well as to promote the responsible use of alarm systems.

Sec. 16-92. Applicability to systems summoning police.

The provisions of this ordinance shall apply to any person, business, or corporation within the Town of Burrillville who uses, operates, or owns any alarm system that summons the police department in response to an alarm signal.

Sec. 16-93. Definitions.

As used in this ordinance, the following words, terms, and phrases shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning.

Alarm business Any business that installs, maintains, monitors, alters, repairs, replaces, or services alarm systems located within the Town of Burrillville.

Alarm system An assembly of equipment and devices (or a single device) designed to detect and signal an unauthorized intrusion, presence of a hazard, or other type of emergency to which the police are expected to immediately respond. The term also includes any device which, when activated, transmits a signal to police headquarters, transmits a signal to a person who relays the information to police headquarters, or produces an audible or visible signal to which the police department is expected to respond. The term also includes any fire alarm systems and alarm systems which monitor temperature,

humidity, or any other condition which is not related directly to an unauthorized intrusion are not included in this ordinance.

Alarm user The owner, occupant, lessee, or agent of any premises in which an alarm is used or provided, who expressly accepts responsibility for an alarm device by registration with the Burrillville Police Department shall be deemed the alarm user.

Audible/visual alarm (a/k/a local alarm) Any device designated for the protection of unauthorized entry on premises thereon, which device generates an external audible sound or flashing light (or both) when it is activated. In addition, the decibel level of audible alarms shall follow the Burrillville Town Ordinance to which it applies.

Automatic dial alarm A telephone device or attachment that mechanically or electronically solicits a telephone call to police headquarters and produces a pre-recorded voice message to report a criminal act or other emergency requiring a police response.

Burglar alarm An alarm system which signals an entry or attempted entry to an area protected by the alarm system.

Central station call center A place of business to which remote alarm devices transmit signals where operators monitor said signals and relay the information to the Burrillville Police Department.

Direct line alarm An alarm device which is connected to an alarm panel within the communications center of the Burrillville Police Department which electronically activates a signal soliciting an emergency response.

Emergency An occasion threatening the security of life and/or property, which reasonably calls for a response by the police department. A response due to failure of the alarm system or due to personal error is not considered an emergency.

Holdup alarm An automatic alarm signaling a robbery or attempted robbery.

False alarm Any alarm activation which is responded to and found by police to have been caused by anything other than a legitimate breach of the security system shall be deemed a false alarm. Some examples include alarms accidentally set off by owner (or other individuals authorized by the alarm user to have access to the premises) and not canceled in a timely manner, unsecured animals in the house, and doors or windows left unsecured. Excluded from this provision will be alarms caused by thunder storms, power outages, and other acts of nature where multiple alarms in the area are affected.

Keyholder The individual(s) designated by the alarm user to respond to the premises of the alarm when notified by the police and/or the central station.

Manual holdup alarm An alarm system whose signal transmission is initiated by a person inside the alarmed premises or an observer to the action which requires police.

Police Chief The Chief of Police of the Town of Burrillville or his designated agent.

Sec. 16-94. Alarm registration.

Each alarm user who plans to transmit signals to the Burrillville Police Department, whether via a central station, local alarm, automatic dial, or direct line, must register with the police department under the following guidelines:

The alarm user shall complete an alarm registration form provided by the Burrillville Police Department (and also made available on the Department's website) within ten business days of the system installation, or the transfer of an alarmed premises to a new owner/lessee. All information on the form shall be completed, including the type of alarm, location, keyholder information, and other pertinent facts. Any and all changes to the alarm registration information must be provided to the Burrillville Police Department in writing within ten business days.

Residents and businesses within the Town of Burrillville who are already using any alarm system shall register these existing systems with the police department within 10 business days of the effective date of this ordinance.

There shall be a one-time registration fee of \$10.00 for each alarm system registered and this fee is payable at the time of registration.

Any existing alarm system within the Town of Burrillville that is already registered (meaning that complete information has been entered into a site file at the police department communications center) will be considered grandfathered and no registration fee shall apply. However, alarm users who have previously registered shall still be required to fill out the new registration form as it may require information that was not previously provided. No registration fee shall be required to re-register an alarm system.

Alarm registrations are not transferable.

If a residential alarm user is over the age of 65, is blind, deaf, or otherwise physically handicapped (to the extent that his or her mobility is substantially limited), in addition to being a primary resident of the dwelling, and assuring that no business is conducted out of the residence, then the registration fee shall be waived by the Chief of Police.

Sec. 16-95. Automatic telephone dialers.

Automatic telephone dialers shall be allowed to dial the Burrillville Police Department a maximum of two (2) times for any single activation of the alarm system. They may also dial a keyholder and/or a central station who will then notify the Burrillville Police. Specifically:

The length of time for the delivery of the first emergency recorded message shall not exceed one minute. The time lapse for the delivery of the second message shall be in the range of one to two minutes later.

The content of the recorded message must be intelligible, concise, and in a format that is appropriate to the nature of the alarm. The address must be clearly stated and very specific. An example of an appropriate recorded message would be: "The burglar alarm system has been activated at the James Smith Residence, 56 Maple Street in Harrisville. That is five-six Maple Street in Harrisville. Please send police. Again, the second burglar alarm system has been activated at the Smith residence, 56 (FIVE SIX) Maple Street in Harrisville. Please send police."

No recorded message shall be delivered to the police department more than twice as the result of single stimulation or activation of the alarm system.

Sec. 16-96. Audible and local alarms.

Unless required by law, no alarm device which produces an exterior audible signal shall be installed unless its operation is automatically restricted to a maximum of 15 minutes. In addition, it is unlawful for any person to use, or cause to be used, or to install a local or audible alarm system which, upon activation, emits a sound similar to that emitted by sirens on emergency vehicles. The decibel volume of any audible alarms shall be in accordance with the Town of Burrillville Noise Ordinance.

Sec. 16-97. Direct line alarms.

Only financial institutions and government agencies (local, state, or federal) shall be permitted to connect alarm systems directly to the communications center of the police department. Any and all costs incurred with the installation and maintenance of these alarms shall be the sole responsibility of the institution or agency. Any non-applicable alarms that were connected prior to this enactment shall be disconnected by the alarm user or the respective alarm company no later than March 1, 2012.

This ordinance does not prohibit fire alarm systems which are deemed necessary by the Burrillville fire departments to be established as direct line alarms at the Burrillville Police Department.

Sec. 16-98. Testing of alarm systems.

No alarm system will be demonstrated or tested to merely determine the speed or type of police response. An alarm user or company must notify the police department prior to any service, testing, repair or adjustment of an alarm system. Likewise, the alarm user must notify police immediately upon completion of these tasks.

Sec. 16-99. House and building numbers.

All buildings with registered alarm devices shall be required to display the proper house/ building/ apartment number as outlined:

Where the structure is within 50 feet of the edge of the roadway, the number shall be displayed on the front of the structure in the vicinity of the front door or entryway.

Where the structure is over 50 feet from the edge of the roadway, the assigned number shall be displayed on the structure as well as on a post, fence, wall, or mailbox at the property line, adjacent to the walk or access road to the structure.

Numbers must be easily visible from the street and should be a minimum of 2 inches in height and displayed with a color which is contrasting to the background. Numbers which are illuminated or those made out of reflective material are the most easily visible to police.

Sec. 16-100. Smoke detectors or fire alarms.

Nothing in this ordinance shall be deemed to prohibit the installation and use of smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, or fire alarms designed for internal use for the protection, safety, and well-being of the occupants of any building within the Town of Burrillville.

Sec. 16-101. Confidentiality of information.

All statements and information relating to the installation and location of an alarm system given to the Chief of Police or his designee shall be maintained in strict confidence within the police department and may be made public only when required in a court action resulting from a violation of any provision of this chapter or by a court of the appropriate jurisdiction.

Sec. 16-102. Violations and penalties.

Any and all violations of this ordinance shall fall under the jurisdiction of the Burrillville Municipal Court. For violations requiring hearing, fines may be imposed up to the amount of \$500, as may be amended, (Burrillville Town Ordinance §11-5) and/or revocation of the alarm registration of the user. Charges heard before the Municipal Court are also subject to applicable court costs (Burrillville Town Ordinance §11-5). Specific penalties and fines for violations of this ordinance are as follows:

Failure to register an alarm system or failure to give notice of changes in registration information, as set forth in the Alarm Registration section of this ordinance, will be first given a written notice to register the alarm within 10 business days. Failure to do so or any subsequent violation by the same alarm user will result in a summons to appear in court.

Failure of a keyholder to respond to the premises of an alarm within 30 minutes when summoned by a police department official (or by their own alarm monitoring agency at the request of the police) shall result in a written warning for the first offense. Any subsequent violation will result in a summons to appear in court.

Failure of an automatic dial alarm to provide the information outlined in said section of this ordinance, or any telephone dialer set to call the Burrillville Police Department more than two times per alarm, shall result in a written warning for the first offense. Any subsequent violation will result in a summons to appear in court.

Failure of a local alarm siren or bell to reset or shut off after the maximum 15 minutes as mandated by this ordinance shall result in a written warning for the first offense. Any subsequent violation will result in a summons to appear in court. Any violation of the decibel level of audible alarms shall fall under the Burrillville Noise Ordinance.

After responding to two (2) false alarms at any given alarmed location within a two-calendar-year period, a written warning will be given to the alarm user granting a 10-business-day grace period to correct the problem. If, after the grace period, there are any subsequent false alarms, the alarm user shall be fined \$100.00 for the first offense and \$ 200.00 for the second offense. Any additional offenses within the two-year period shall result in an automatic summons to appear before the Burrillville Municipal Court for a hearing.

Sec. 16-103. Appeals.

All appeals for fines, penalties, reviews, and revocations made by the Burrillville Municipal Court regarding this alarm system ordinance may be appealed to the Rhode Island Superior Court (Burrillville Town Ordinance 11-6 and Rhode Island General Law 45-24-3.1) Information regarding the appeals procedure as set forth by the Superior Court shall be made available upon request.

Sec. 16-104. Disclaimer of liability.

Notwithstanding the provisions of this ordinance, the Town, its departments, officers, agents, and employees shall be under no obligation whatsoever concerning the adequacy, operation or maintenance of any alarm device or of the alarm monitoring facility. No liability whatsoever is assumed for the failure of alarm devices or monitoring facilities or for the failure to respond to alarms or for any reason in connection with such alarm devices. Each alarm user shall be deemed to hold and save harmless the Town, its departments, officers, agents, and employees from liability in connection with said alarm user's alarm system and/or monitoring service.

This ordinance shall become effective January 1, 2012