

ALARM USER INFORMATION

Alarm registration is required in the TOWN OF WILLIAMSTOWN for commercial and residential alarm systems previously installed, new installations, or if you take over control of an existing alarm that was previously controlled by another Alarm User.

The purpose of alarm registration with the TOWN OF WILLIAMSTOWN is to ensure accurate, up-to-date information that facilitates police responding to your alarmed location. This is separate from the information you may have already provided to your alarm monitoring company. It also enables the Police Department to contact responsible parties or alarm repair personnel in an emergency.

Alarm systems that use an automatic dialer: The Williamstown Police Department no longer maintains a working phone number that accepts pre-recorded messages that report an emergency from your alarm system. Please re-program your system to contact a monitoring company.

Every audible alarm must have a timing device, which automatically shuts off the bell or siren within 15 minutes after activation.

The initial Alarm Permit Application fee of \$25.00 per residential or commercial alarm site is determined by the Town Manager. Your alarm permit will remain valid unless revoked and must be renewed on or by July 1st annually. Permit renewals are \$10.00 annually. An Alarm Permit is not transferable to another individual, business, association or similar entity. Notify the Police Alarm Administrator of any changes to your application information within 5 days. Updates are made at no charge.

It is unlawful for any person to activate an alarm system for the purpose of summoning the police except when it is reasonably believed that an attempt is being made to commit a robbery, burglary, or other serious crime.

The following sections refer to Williamstown Municipal Codes Chapter 8:

Section 8-1 B The purposes of this by-law are to reduce and eliminate false alarm dispatch requests, to encourage alarm users and alarm businesses to maintain the operational reliability of their alarm systems, to establish a system of regulations and fees with respect to alarm systems and to provide for penalties for violations of this by-law.

Section 8-3 A No Alarm User shall operate, or cause to be operated, an Alarm System without a valid permit issued in accordance with this by-law. A separate permit is required for each Alarm Site.

Section 8-3 E (d) That a set of alarm instructions for the Alarm System, including written guidelines on how to avoid false alarms, have been left with the Alarm user; and **(e)** that the Alarm Business has trained the Alarm User in proper use of the Alarm System, including instructions on how to avoid false alarms.

Section 8-3 E (g) That such application form contain an agreement from the Alarm User in favor of the Town of Williamstown Police Department to break into and enter the registered premises forcibly without liability on the indemnification from the user in favor of the Town and its officer with respect to any such forcible breaking and entering, in order to respond to such an alarm.

ALARM SYSTEM – A device or services of devices, including, but not limited to, systems interconnected with radio frequency signals, which are designated to discourage crime, by emitting or transmitting a remote or local audible, visual or electronic signal indicating an alarm condition.

FALSE ALARM DISPATCH - An Alarm Dispatch Request to the police department, where responding officers find no evidence of a criminal offense or attempted criminal offense after having completed a timely investigation of the Alarm Site. An Alarm Dispatch Request which is cancelled by the Alarm Business or the Alarm User prior to the dispatch of the responding officer shall not be considered a False Alarm Dispatch.

FINE STRUCTURE - 1st False Alarm – No fine; 2nd False Alarm – No fine (warning letter sent); 3rd & 4th False alarm - \$100 fine & suspension of permit; 5th or more False Alarm - \$300 fine per event. Any person operating a non-permitted alarm system (whether revoked, suspended or never acquired) is subject to a fine of \$300.00 for each non-permitted system.

NO RESPONSE – This action may be implemented if an alarm site has 5+ instances of false alarms within a 12-month period. Police may not respond to any future alarm activation unless proof of corrective action has been submitted to the Alarm Administrator. A “No Response” action shall not restrict the Alarm User from requesting police response to a 9-1-1 emergency incident.

CONFIDENTIALITY – Confidential information contained in alarm permit application shall be held in confidence by all employees or representatives of the Town with access to such information, unless subject to disclosure pursuant to Massachusetts Public Records Law.