

Chapter 27  
**ALARMS**

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**SEC. 27.1     DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of this chapter, the following words and phrases shall have the following meaning, unless it is apparent from the context that a different meaning is intended.

27.1-1     Alarm Agent: means any person who is employed by an alarm business, either directly or indirectly, whose duties include any of the following: selling, maintaining, leasing, servicing, repairing, altering, replacing, moving or installing on any building, structure or facility, an alarm system within the City. Exemption: the provisions of this section do not include a person who engages in the manufacture or sale of an alarm system from a fixed location and who neither visits the location where the alarm system is to be installed, nor designs the scheme for the physical location and installation of the alarm system in a specific location.

27.1-2     Alarm Business: means the business of any individual, partnership, corporation or other entity engaged in selling, leasing, maintaining, servicing, repairing, altering, replacing, moving or installing any alarm system or causing to be sold, leased, maintained, service repair altered, replaced, moved or installed any alarm system in or on any building structure, or facility within the City.

27.1-3     Alarm Owner: person upon whose property the alarm is installed.

27.1-4     Appellant: means a person who appeals a decision made pursuant to this ordinance.

27.1-5     Applicant: means a person who files an application for a new or renewal permit as provided in this ordinance.

27.1-6     Audible Alarm: means any mechanical or electrical device designed for the detection of unauthorized entry on the land, building, structure and/or facility of an alarm owner; or any mechanical or electrical device designed for the detection of smoke and/or heat therein, which generates an audible sound outdoors when it is activated.

27.1-7 City: means the City of Piedmont.

27.1-8 Day: means calendar day.

27.1-9 False Alarm: shall mean an alarm signal to which personnel of the Piedmont police or Piedmont fire department respond where there is no police or fire emergency as defined in this Chapter.

27.1-10 Fire Alarm System: means any mechanical or electrical device which is designed or used for the detection of smoke and/or heat within a building, structure, facility or any portion thereof, which when activated emits a sound, displays a light or transmits a signal or message outside the protected building for the purpose of alerting occupants or others of the existence of a fire emergency. Fire alarm systems include, but are not limited to, audible alarms and proprietor alarms. Devices which are not designed or used to register alarms that are audible, visible or perceptible outside of the protected building, structure or facility are not included within this definition.

27.1-11 Fire Chief: means the fire chief of the City.

27.1-12 Fire Emergency: means any incident requiring the immediate response of the fire department due to danger to life, health, or property.

27.1-13 Notice: means written notice, given by personal service upon the addressee or given by United States mail, postage prepaid, addressed to the person to be notified at his last known address. Service of such notice shall be effective upon the completion of personal service or upon placing of the same in the custody of the United States Postal Service.

27.1-14 Permit Issuer: means the Department of Public Works.

27.1-15 Permit Holder: means any person who shall be granted a business permit, as provided in this chapter, and agents and representatives of that person.

27.1-16 Person: means natural person, firm, partnership, association, corporation or other legal capacity.

27.1-17 Police Alarm System: means any mechanical or electrical device which is designed or used for the detection of unauthorized entry into a building, structure or facility and for alerting others of an unauthorized entry or other danger to life or health, and which emits a sound or transmits a signal message outside the protected building when activated. Alarm systems include, but are not limited to, audible alarms and proprietor alarms. Devices which are not designed or used to register alarms that are audible, visible, or perceptible outside of the protected building, structure or facility are not included within this definition.

27.1-18 Police Chief: means the police chief of the City.

27.1-19 Police Emergency: means any incident requiring the immediate response of the police department due to an unauthorized entry of a building or a danger to life, health, or property.

27.1-20 Proprietor Alarm: means an alarm which is not serviced by an alarm business or an owner installed alarm system not serviced by an alarm business.

27.1-21 Subscriber: means any person who purchases, leases, contracts for, or otherwise obtains an alarm system from an alarm business. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)

SEC. 27.2 ALARM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

The police chief and fire chief may prescribe minimum standards and regulations for the construction and maintenance of all alarm systems installed within the City. These standards and regulations shall become effective upon adoption thereof by resolution of the City Council of the City of Piedmont.

(a) No alarm system shall be installed which protects any outdoor property perimeter, except locked entry gates may be alarmed.

(b) Any alarm system installed in the City of Piedmont must have posted in a conspicuous location the emergency twenty-four hour telephone number to be called in order to reset or turn off an alarm system which has been activated.

(c) No person shall use or cause to be used any telephone device or telephone attachment on the primary trunk line of the Piedmont police and fire departments which reproduces any prerecorded message without permission of the chief of police or the fire chief respectively.

(d) An audible alarm shall have a timing device that will terminate the alarm within fifteen (15) minutes of activation.

(e) It shall be unlawful to install such a system which activates a sound similar to sirens in use on emergency vehicles or for civil disaster purposes.

(f) For the protection and safety of building inhabitants, an alarm company which relays a manually operated alarm from a customer of the company to the police communications center shall notify the police communications center that the alarm was manually operated. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)

SEC. 27.3 ALARM SYSTEM INSPECTIONS

The police chief may require the inspection and approval of all police alarm systems installed within the City and the fire chief may require inspection and approval of all fire alarm systems installed within the City. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)

SEC. 27.4     ALARM AGENT PERMITS

27.4-1     State Permit. Alarm agents shall carry a valid alarm agent permit as issued by the Bureau of Consumer Affairs of the State of California on his or her person at all times while so engaged within the City. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)

27.4-2     City Permit. Any person engaged in the business of selling or leasing or installation of alarms in the City of Piedmont shall obtain a yearly business permit from the City of Piedmont Department of Public Works. The fee for such permit shall be set by Council resolution.

After the effective date of this chapter, no alarm agent shall install a police or fire alarm system within the City of Piedmont without first obtaining a Piedmont business permit. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)

27.4-3     Permit Approval and Issuance. A City of Piedmont business permit application shall be submitted by an alarm agent to the Fire Chief or the Police Chief for approval. Approval shall not be given unless sufficient proof is submitted that the alarm agent's alarm system devices to be installed in Piedmont meet or exceed the requirements of Section 27.2. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)

SEC. 27.5     FALSE ALARMS

27.5-1     Notice Required. If a false alarm is activated by any alarm system within the City of Piedmont, a notice of false alarm shall be issued to the alarm owner by the police department. This notice of false alarm shall set forth the time and nature of the false alarm and, if applicable, the fact that a service charge under section 27.5.3 is due and payable within fifteen (15) days after service of the notice.

27.5-2     Owner Response Before Arrival: Alarm owners who make contact with the police department before responding units arrive at the location of the alarm shall not be charged with a false alarm.

27.5-3     Service Charge. A service charge as set by Council resolution from time to time shall be imposed upon the fourth and all ensuing false alarms occurring within a twelve-month period at any one building or premises, except that when ownership of the building or premises changes completely, the count of false alarms shall begin anew. Notice shall be given as set forth in Section 27.5-1 above.

27.5-4 Appeal. The determination of the existence of any false alarm and the imposition of a service charge may be appealed by the alarm owner by a written request to the police chief. The police chief shall, within five (5) days after receiving such request, set a time for hearing and give notice to the owner. The owner may appear at such hearing and testify. The decision of the chief of police shall be final and the alarm owner shall be notified in writing of that decision. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)

SEC. 27.6     VIOLATIONS

Any failure to pay a service charge imposed under Section 27.5 or any failure to comply with the requirements of Section 27.2 shall constitute a violation of this Chapter. If a violation has occurred, the chief of police may take any one or more of the following actions:

27.6-1 Suspend Service. The chief of police may suspend the provision of a police or fire response to an alarm at the building where the violation occurred or whose owner has otherwise violated this chapter. The suspension of services may be appealed by the property owner or resident in the manner provided in Section 27.5.4.

27.6-2 Order Removal. The chief of police may order the removal within thirty (30) days of any device or attachment not operated or maintained in accordance with the provision of this Chapter, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 6 of this Code pertaining to the abatement of nuisances.

27.6-3 Revoke Permit. The chief of police may revoke any business license permit issued hereunder for failure to comply with the conditions thereof, after providing (1) a written notice to the permit holder of the intent to revoke the permit and (2) a reasonable opportunity for the permit holder to appeal the proposed revocation. (Ord. No. 511, 7/89)

SEC. 27.7     JUDICIAL ENFORCEMENT

An action may be commenced in the name of the City in any court of competent jurisdiction for the amount of any delinquent fine. All fines shall be deemed delinquent thirty (30) days after they are due and payable. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)

SEC. 27.8     SEVERABILITY

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance. The City Council hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance and each section, subsection, sentence, clause and phrase hereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more of the sections,

subsections, sentences, clauses or phrases hereof be declared invalid or unconstitutional. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)

SEC. 27.9     FEE EXEMPTIONS

The United States Government, the State of California, counties, municipal corporations, departments thereof and other governmental entities are exempt from all fees authorized by this chapter.

SEC. 27.10    CAR ALARMS

The provisions of this Chapter are not applicable to audible alarms affixed to automobiles. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)

SEC. 27.11    CONFIDENTIALITY

The information furnished and secured pursuant to this ordinance shall be confidential in character and shall not be subject to public inspection and shall be kept so that the contents thereof shall not be known except to the persons charged with the administration of this ordinance. (Ord. No. 511 N.S., 7/89)