

Before activating your alarm system, be sure to securely close and lock all protected doors and windows.

Have your alarm system inspected by a licensed alarm company on an annual basis, replacing the batteries in your alarm system per manufacturer's specifications. Wireless systems may need battery replacements more often than wired systems.

Test your alarm system regularly. Be sure to notify your alarm or monitoring company **first** so that no request for police dispatch is made.

Do not set your alarm off for the purpose of testing!

Stay in regular contact with your alarm company.

Make sure your emergency contact list is current and accurate.

Call your alarm company if you:

- Have an unexplained false alarm
- Get a pet
- Begin a home renovation
- Change your phone number, or switch to a VoIP phone provider (internet based)
- Hire a contractor
- Fumigate
- Plan to sell your home or business

KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOU ACCIDENTALLY SET OFF YOUR ALARM.

DON'T PANIC

Carefully enter your disarm code to reset your system.

WAIT

for your alarm company or monitoring center to call and give them your proper password or passcode. Follow the instructions given by your alarm company to cancel a false alarm.

DO NOT LEAVE

your home or business until you have talked with your alarm monitoring company.

FALSE BURGLAR ALARM REDUCTION TIPS



False alarms are a significant problem for law enforcement throughout the country. False alarms waste resources and divert or delay response to calls that may be true emergencies. Working together, we can reduce false alarms, which will preserve resources and provide more time for officers to engage in crime

In accordance with 4A-5 of the Town Code:
Each alarm user shall register his alarm device or devices with the town prior to use.

New Canaan Police Department
174 South Avenue
New Canaan, CT 06840
Phone: 203-594-3500
Fax: 203-594-3551
newcanaanpolice.org



Before selecting an alarm system, consult several licensed alarm companies to discuss the type of system and features that will be appropriate for you and your living/working environment.

Ask each alarm company how the system they propose avoids false alarms.

Ask how you can operate your system in order to avoid false alarms.

Review procedures with your alarm company that you expect them to follow when an alarm activates:

- Do you want them to make two calls; one to the location and one to your mobile, before requesting police dispatch?
- Do you only want the police notified if an exterior AND interior alarm activate?
- Do you want to put your instructions in writing?

If you have pets, take special care to purchase an alarm system that is pet friendly. You may not want to purchase motion detectors if your pets have free run of the house when the alarm is on. Any kind of pet + motion detectors = a false alarm every time. Be sure to discuss pet concerns with your alarm company.

Power surges and lightning strikes should not cause false alarms. Use surge protection or suppression on **both** the alarm system and the phone line sending the alarm signal to the monitoring center to avoid false alarms.

Confirm that special consideration has been given to the installation of motion sensors or detectors in high bay areas with overhead doors, large exhaust fans or ceiling vents, which allow birds to enter.

False burglar alarms waste your tax dollars.

If you give someone a key to your property, give them a code! Be sure that all individuals with authority to operate your system have been given their own personal password or passcode. Notify your alarm and/or monitoring company of any changes in authorized persons and codes.

Fully educate and train every person with access to your home or business on the precise operation of your alarm system. This may include cleaning crews, children, neighbors, caretakers, employees, and temporary staff.



Be aware that cleaning and repair crews do cause false alarms for which you will be responsible.

Keep door and window frames in good condition. Sagging, warped and loose fitting doors and windows may prevent a tight connection with the alarm contacts. Consider using wide gap contacts on all doors. Always keep doors and windows locked when the alarm is in the "ON" mode to reduce the chance that friends, neighbors or customers may enter and cause the alarm to activate.



Check for drafts that may move curtains, hanging objects or holiday decorations, which can cause motion detectors to activate.

If you acquire new furniture or extensively rearrange existing furniture, be mindful of interior sensors that may be affected.

Notice to Property Owners

Records show a **disturbing increase in False Alarms** related to building construction / remodeling, as well as inadequately maintained Fire Alarm Systems. In order to rectify this costly situation, **the following preventative steps should be taken by the property owners to prevent false alarms:**

1. **Notify the Alarm Monitoring Company each day prior to the starting any construction / remodeling work. Advise the alarm company that work is being performed and that the system will be off line or zones disabled during the construction.**
2. **Cover detectors that may be effected by dust from construction and provide dust barriers and ventilation to areas not under construction.**
3. **Make sure occupants are aware of the alarm status.**
4. **After construction is completed for the day, make sure all covers on detectors are removed and the fire alarm system is restored and functioning properly.**
5. **Notify the Alarm Company that the fire alarm is back in service.**

****Note-After construction is completed in full, your Fire Alarm System may have to be cleaned and serviced by your alarm company.**

As a reminder: Avoid having smoke detectors placed close to the kitchen, fireplace or heating unit and have your Fire Alarm System serviced at least once a year. Remember, that you, the property owner, are responsible for the functioning of your Fire Alarm System.

Thank you for your cooperation.

New Canaan Fire Co. #1

New Canaan Fire Marshal's Office

Chapter 100. Alarm Devices

[HISTORY: Adopted New Canaan Town Council 11-12-1986, effective 1-1-1987 (Ch. 4A of the 1965 Code). Amendments noted where applicable.]

§ 100-1. Preamble.

It is determined that the number of false alarms being made to the Police and Fire Departments hinders the efficiency of those Departments, lowers the morale of Department personnel, constitutes a danger to the general public in the streets during responses to false alarms and jeopardizes the response of volunteers; and that the adoption of this ordinance will reduce the number of false alarms and promote the responsible use of alarm devices in New Canaan.

§ 100-2. Definitions.

For the purpose of this ordinance, the following definitions shall apply:

ALARM DEVICE

- A. Any device which, when activated, calls for Police or Fire Department response as follows:
- (1) Transmits a signal to police or fire headquarters;
 - (2) Transmits a signal to a person who relays information to police, fire or EMS headquarters; or
 - (3) Produces an audible or visible signal to which the Police or Fire Departments are expected to respond.
- B. Excluded from this definition and the scope of this ordinance are devices which are designed to alert or signal only persons within the premises in which the device is installed.

ALARM USER

The owner of any premises in which an alarm device is used, provided that an occupant who expressly accepts responsibility for an alarm device by registration pursuant to § 100-5 shall be deemed the "alarm user."

AUTOMATIC DIAL ALARM

A telephone device or attachment that mechanically or electronically selects a telephone line to police, fire or EMS headquarters and reproduces a prerecorded voice message to report a criminal act, fire or other emergency calling for Police or Fire Department or EMS response. Excluded from this definition are devices which relay a digital-coded signal to police or fire headquarters.

CENTRAL STATION

An office to which remote alarm devices transmit signals where operators monitor those signals and relay information to the Police and Fire Departments or EMS.

CONTRACTOR

Any person, firm or corporation in the business of supplying and installing alarm devices or servicing the same.

EMS

Emergency medical services.

FALSE ALARM

Any automatic activation of an alarm device to which the Police or Fire Department or EMS respond and which is not caused by a criminal act, fire, smoke or other emergency and which is not the result of a verified malfunction of telephone equipment, power failure, lightning strike or a generally recognized cataclysmic event.

[Amended 2-6-1991, effective 2-22-1991]

§ 100-3. Administrator designated.

- A. There shall be in the Town an administrator for alarm devices, who shall have the powers and duties granted to him under this ordinance.
- B. The Director of Finance or his/her designee shall be the administrator under the direction and control of the Board of Selectmen, which is authorized to adopt regulations for the administration of this ordinance.

§ 100-4. Citation Hearing Officers.

[Amended 7-12-1989, effective 7-28-1989]

In accordance with Section 7-148 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the First Selectman shall appoint one or more Citation Hearing Officers, other than police officers or employees or persons who issue citations, to conduct hearings authorized by this ordinance.

§ 100-5. Registration of alarm devices; procedure.

- A. Each alarm user shall register his alarm device or devices with the administrator prior to use.
- B. Alarm device registration shall be accomplished by filling out a form provided by the administrator, to include such information concerning the identity of the prospective alarm user, the name of the central station monitoring the alarm, the identity of the alarm user's contractor, if any, and the nature of the proposed alarm device as the administrator may require. The administrator shall issue the alarm user a written acknowledgment of proper registration.
- C. It shall be the responsibility of each alarm user to notify the administrator of changes in registration information.

§ 100-6. Registration of central stations; procedure.

- A. Each central station which plans to transmit signals to the Police or Fire Departments or EMS must register with the administrator before doing so.
- B. Central station registration shall be accomplished by filling out a form provided by the administrator, to include such information as the administrator may require concerning the identity of the applicant, the type of its business organization (individual proprietorship, partnership, corporation), the principal place of business of the entity and the location of the office monitoring alarms. The administrator shall issue the central station a written acknowledgment of proper registration.
- C. It shall be the responsibility of each central station to notify the administrator of changes in the registration information, but such notification need not be given more frequently than once a month.

§ 100-7. Registration of contractors.

Each contractor who wishes to provide authorized inspection and repair services in accordance with § 100-13 shall register with the administrator. Certifications called for in § 100-13 shall be accepted from registered contractors only.

§ 100-8. Automatic dial alarms prohibited.

No automatic dial alarm may be installed after January 1, 1987. No automatic alarm device in use on such date may remain in use after July 1, 1987.

§ 100-9. Special authorization for digital-coded signals required.

- A. After the publication of this ordinance, the administrator will not permit the registration of an alarm device which transmits a digital-coded signal to either the Police Department or the Fire Department unless the alarm user has

received special authorization in accordance with Subsection B.

- B. A commercial establishment or a not-for-profit institution may have a direct line to the Police Department or Fire Department, provided that:
 - (1) The connection is by a high-grade, dedicated line meeting specifications that may be established by the Departments concerned.
 - (2) The Police Chief or Fire Chief determines that the level of risk and exposure justifies a direct line.
 - (3) The Police Chief or Fire Chief has notified the administrator of his approval of such a direct line.
- C. After July 1, 1987, signals that result from the activation of an alarm device for which a direct connection has not been authorized in accordance with Subsection B must be transmitted to a central station, which, after such verification as is practicable, will transmit the alarm to the Police Department, Fire Department or EMS.

§ 100-10. Exterior audible signals.

From and after July 1, 1987, unless required by law or regulation, no alarm device which produces an exterior audible signal shall be installed or maintained unless its operation is automatically restricted to a maximum of 15 minutes.

§ 100-11. Reporting of false alarms; notification.

- A. The Police Department, Fire Department and EMS shall report false alarms to the administrator, based upon the report of the investigating officer.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the central station to notify the alarm user or his designated keyholder whenever the central station reports an alarm activation to the Police Department, Fire Department or EMS.

§ 100-12. False alarm charges; notification and procedure for contesting liability.

[Amended 7-12-1989, effective 7-28-1989; 2-6-1991, effective 2-22-1991]

- A. Whenever the administrator determines that a false alarm has occurred, the administrator shall mail a written warning as required by Connecticut General Statutes § 7-148(10) to the alarm user stating that the administrator has made such determination and that a charge will be imposed for the second and each subsequent false alarm within the same fiscal year of the Town in the amount of \$100 for a Police Department or EMS response and \$200 in the case of a Fire Department response.
[Amended 7-8-1998, effective 7-24-1998]
- B. Upon determining that two or more false alarms have occurred within the same fiscal year of the Town with respect to the same alarm user, the administrator shall send a citation in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 7-152c to such alarm user, including a notice of the following:
 - (1) The allegation against such alarm user and any charges imposed.
 - (2) His right to contest his liability before a Citation Hearing Officer if he submits a written request for hearing within 10 days of receipt of notice from the municipality.
 - (3) An assessment and judgment entering without further notice, if the alarm user does not make written request for a hearing.
- C. Any person who requests a hearing shall be given written notice of the date, time and place for the hearing. Such hearing shall be held in accordance with the provisions of Section 7-152c of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Citation Hearing Officer, if he determines that the person requesting the hearing is liable for the violation of this ordinance, shall enter and assess the fines, penalties and costs.

§ 100-13. Inspection required; certification.

[Amended 7-12-1989, effective 7-28-1989; 2-6-1991, effective 2-22-1991]

- A. If activations of any alarm device have resulted in five false alarms within a single fiscal year of the Town, the administrator shall, when notifying the alarm user of this fifth false alarm and the charge therefor, request that the alarm user arrange to have the alarm device inspected by a contractor, that the alarm device be adjusted or repaired, if necessary, and that the alarm user submit a certification, in writing, from the contractor that he has inspected the alarm device and that it is in proper working order. Such notification by the administrator shall be sent by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested.
- B. Such certification must be submitted within 15 days from the date of the return receipt for the administrator's letter. However, if the alarm user requests an extension of time to file the report because of absence from the Town or other satisfactory reason, the administrator shall extend for a reasonable time the date for filing.
- C. If the certification is not received within the fifteen-day period or permitted extension thereof, the administrator shall notify the alarm user that:
 - (1) The registration of the alarm device is suspended.
 - (2) Thereafter, the alarm device shall be deemed unregistered and, unless disconnected, subject to the penalties therefor.
 - (3) The alarm user has the right to contest the suspension before a Citation Hearing Officer if he submits a written request within 10 days of receipt of notice from the municipality. The suspension shall be lifted and the alarm user so notified when a satisfactory certification has been received by the administrator.
- D. Any person who requests a hearing shall be given written notice of the date, time and place for the hearing. Such hearing shall be held in accordance with the provisions of Section 7-152c of the Connecticut General Statutes.

§ 100-14. Notice to include instructions.

[Amended 7-12-1989, effective 7-28-1989]

Each notice of a false alarm charge, the reaffirmation of such a charge by the administrator or the suspension of a registration shall refer to and provide instructions concerning the alarm user's right to further recourse.

§ 100-15. Confidential information.

[Amended 7-12-1989, effective 7-28-1989;^[1] 2-6-1991, effective 2-22-1991]

All information in the possession of the administrator, the Citation Hearing Officers, Police Department, Fire Department or EMS concerning particular alarm users and particular alarm devices shall not be divulged without the written consent of the alarm user or users concerned, except information as to the occurrence of false alarms. This provision shall not be construed to limit access to information as provided by law.

[1] *Editor's Note: This ordinance also redesignated §§ 4A-17 through 4A-23 as §§ 4A-16 through 4A-22, respectively.*

§ 100-16. Information to be compiled.

The administrator, Police Department, Fire Department and EMS shall, with respect to each and every false alarm, compile information concerning alarm devices, contractors and sources of false alarms in a form such that the information may be evaluated in terms of relative reliability of different sorts of alarm devices and particular contractors and the frequency of false alarms attributable to different categories of sources.

§ 100-17. Town not liable.

Notwithstanding the provisions of this ordinance, the Town and 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 facilities at police and fire headquarters. No liability whatsoever is assumed for the failure of such alarm devices or monitoring facilities or for the failure to respond to alarms or for any other omission in connection with such alarm devices.

§ 100-18. Violations and penalties.

Any person who performs or causes to be performed any of the following acts shall be subject to a penalty not to exceed \$100 for each such act:

- A. Failure to register an alarm device or give notice of changes in registration information as required by this ordinance.
- B. Use of an automatic dial alarm or an exterior audible alarm device in violation of the provisions of this ordinance.

§ 100-19. General fund for charges and fees.

Charges for false alarms, appeal fees and penalties for violations shall be collected by the administrator and placed in the general fund.

§ 100-20. Enforcement.

[Amended 2-6-1991, effective 2-22-1991]

The provisions of this chapter are designated for enforcement in accordance with Section 7-148 and Section 7-152c of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the Town may institute civil proceedings to enforce the provisions herein contained.

§ 100-21. Applicability.

The provisions of this ordinance shall not apply to alarm devices on premises owned or controlled by the Town, including the Board of Education, the State of Connecticut or the Government of the United States nor to alarm devices installed in a licensed motor vehicle, trailer or boat.

§ 100-22. Effective date.

This ordinance shall take effect January 1, 1987.



TOWN OF NEW CANAAN

Alarm Ordinance Registration Form

Alarm Owner/User

Name _____

Street Address _____

Mailing Address if different _____

Phone: Home ___ - ___ - ___ Work ___ - ___ - ___

Name of Occupant or User, if different _____

Alarm Installation

Installer Name / Address _____

Phone _____

Monitor Service Name / Address _____

Phone _____

System Type

Fire Burglar Medical Other _____

Residence Commercial Public Building

If an exterior audible device is used in the system, is this device automatically restricted to 15 min of operation Yes No

Certification

I hereby certify that I have read the provisions of the Town of New Canaan Alarm Ordinance and that to the best of my knowledge, the information I have provided in this registration is correct. I also agree to accept full responsibility for the alarm device within the terms of the Ordinance and agree to fulfill all requirements.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please return form to: New Canaan Police Department
174 South Avenue
New Canaan, CT 06840
or fax to 203 594 3551