

ORDINANCE NO. 2480

AN ORDINANCE to amend The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1963, as amended, by adding a new chapter numbered 27B; which new Chapter 27B relates to SECURITY ALARM SYSTEMS.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

Section 1. That the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1963, as amended, be and the same hereby is amended by adding a new chapter numbered 27B to read as follows:

CHAPTER 27B.

SECURITY ALARM SYSTEMS.

Sec. 27B-1. Definitions.

Alarm board. A facility located within the Alexandria Police Department's communications center which is designed to receive direct signals from security alarm systems, central stations or other devices which are designed to signal actual or threatened criminal activity.

Audible alarm. A device located at or on the protected premises which generates an audible signal when activated. This device is designed to signal a breach of security.

Automatic dialing device. A device at the protected premises which is interconnected to the telephone line and is programmed to select a telephone number which terminates at the Alexandria Police Department and transmits a prerecorded voice message or code which signals the existence of criminal activity at the protected premises.

Central station. A commercial company whose business is to monitor and receive alarm signals from protected premises and which performs contracted services for alarm users, including transmission of these alarm signals to the alarm board of the Alexandria Police Department.

False alarm. Any security alarm signal communicated directly or indirectly to the Alexandria Police Department which is not in response to actual or threatened criminal activity requiring immediate police response. False alarms include negligently or accidentally activated signals; signals which are the result of faulty, malfunctioning or improperly installed or maintained equipment; signals which are purposely activated to summon the police in situations where there is no actual or threatened criminal activity. False alarms shall not include signals activated by unusually severe weather conditions or other causes which are identified and determined by the chief of police to be beyond the control of the user.

Person. Any individual, group of persons, firm, partnership, company, corporation or association of any kind.

Protected premises. The premises upon which a security alarm system is located.

Security alarm system. Any assembly of equipment or a device designated to detect and signal unauthorized intrusion, attempted burglary, robbery or other criminal activity at the protected

premises. A security alarm system may include a system connected to a central station or any other system which directly signals the police department.

User. Any person using a security alarm system regardless of whether or not the person owns the premises on which the security alarm system is located.

Sec. 27B-2. Unlawful activation of security alarm system.

It shall be unlawful for a person knowingly, and without just cause, to activate a security alarm to notify the police department in situations where there is no actual or threatened criminal activity. Any violation of this section shall be punishable by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for each offense.

Sec. 27B-3. Automatic dialing device; prohibited.

It shall be unlawful for any user to install or operate an automatic dialing device which is programmed to transmit a pre-recorded message or a code signal directly to the police department. Any violation of this section shall be punishable by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

Sec. 27B-4. Requirements for connection of a security alarm system to the alarm board.

Based on procedures and guidelines developed by the chief of police, any business establishment located within the City of Alexandria may connect its security alarm system directly into a telephone trunk line which terminates at the alarm board at the Alexandria Police Department upon the following conditions:

(a) Submission to the chief of police of a written request on forms provided by the chief of police containing the following information:

(1) The name, address and telephone number of the person making the request;

(2) The address and telephone number of the premises secured by the security alarm system;

(3) The names, addresses and telephone numbers of the person installing, the person maintaining and the person owning the security alarm system;

(4) The names and addresses of at least two (2) persons to be contacted in the event of an alarm malfunction;

(5) The type of alarm (intrusion, hold-up, etc.); and

(6) Any additional relevant information required by the chief of police.

(b) The establishment must have a valid business license issued by the City of Alexandria, Virginia.

Sec. 27B-5. Responsibility of user of alarm system after approval by chief of police.

Upon approval by the chief of police, the user shall be responsible for:

(a) Installation and hookup of the alarm;

(b) Payment of a service charge of thirty dollars (\$30.00) for a third false alarm in a six- (6) month period which results in a response by a police officer to the premises from which the alarm was first transmitted. For each subsequent false alarm in a six- (6) month period, there may be imposed upon the user a service charge of fifty dollars (\$50.00). The chief of police shall be responsible for billing the user for the service charge. Said service charge will be paid to the director of finance of the city;

(c) A continuous training program for employees and other persons who may have occasion to activate the security alarm system. The training shall emphasize the proper setting, activation and resetting of alarms; and

(d) A written agreement that the City of Alexandria assumes no responsibility or obligation as to any omission or commission resulting from the user's security alarm system.

Sec. 27B-6. Disconnection from the alarm board.

In the event of the occurrence of four (4) or more false alarms from a single location in any six- (6) month period or in the event a user fails to pay the assessed service charge within sixty (60) days of billing, the chief of police may disconnect that user's alarm system from the alarm board after giving that user thirty (30) days' written notice of a disconnection date. Said location may remain connected to the alarm board if within the said thirty- (30) day notice period, the user remits all outstanding service charges, plus a penalty fee of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) to the director of finance of the city and provides the chief of police with satisfactory evidence that corrective action has been taken to prevent additional false alarms.

Sec. 27B-7. Reconnection to the alarm board.

A security alarm system disconnected by the chief of police, pursuant to section 27B-6 of this Code, may be reconnected at the discretion of the chief of police upon written request by the owner, payment of all outstanding charges and payment of a reconnection fee of one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

Sec. 27B-8. Appeal proceedings.

Any user may appeal an action by the police department to disconnect an alarm, denial by the police department to connect a security alarm system to the alarm board or a denial by the police department to reconnect an alarm which has been disconnected. The appeal shall be made to the chief of police, in writing, within thirty (30) days after such action has been taken.

Section 2. That the title of and an informal memorandum explaining this ordinance shall be published in a newspaper of

general circulation published in the city not later than five days following its introduction together with a notice containing the time and place for a public hearing. The city clerk shall have the full text of this ordinance printed in sufficient numbers to supply copies to meet request. The city clerk shall note the date of introduction and first reading, the date of publication, the date of the public hearing, and the date of the second reading and final passage in the minutes of the meeting. This ordinance shall become effective the date of its final passage.

CHARLES E. BEATLEY, JR.  
Mayor

Final Passage: June 14, 1980