

WASHINGTON COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Date of enactment: 2/18/14

Date of publication: 2/18/14

VOTE

2013 ORDINANCE 28

AN ORDINANCE to repeal Section 14.17 relating to: Regulation of Emergency Alarm Systems.

The people of the County of Washington, represented in the Board of Supervisors, do ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 14.17 of the code is repealed and amended to read:

~~**14.17 Section 14.17 (Reserved) REGULATION OF EMERGENCY ALARM SYSTEMS.** (1) Purpose. Unregulated alarm systems adversely affect law enforcement and fire protection agencies in the discharge of their duties due to a high incidence of false alarms, which reduce the credibility of alarms as detection devices and increase the cost of protective services. This section is intended to reduce false alarms and control unauthorized systems by regulating alarm systems in order to promote public peace and good order within Washington County.~~

~~(2) Definitions. (a) "Alarm" as used in this section shall mean any device which when actuated by a criminal act or other emergency requiring police response, transmits a signal to a central alarm system or directly to the Sheriff's Department or produces an audible or visible signal designed to notify persons within the audible or visual range of the signal. Except where inconsistent, the term "alarm" shall include automatic dialers.~~

~~(b) "Automatic Dialer" as used in this section shall mean any telephone or electronic device or attachment which automatically selects a public primary telephone trunk of the Sheriff's Department and produces any pre-recorded message to report a criminal act, a fire or other emergency.~~

~~(c) "False Alarm" as used in this section means a signal from an alarm, telephone or other contact with the Sheriff's Department resulting in response by the department when an emergency situation does not exist, including without limitation, the activation of an alarm through negligence of the alarm owner or lessee or his or her agent or employee, or through mechanical failure.~~

~~(3) Automatic Dialers Regulated. (a) No person shall sell, use or cause to be used any automatic dialer except in conformance with this section.~~

~~(b) Automatic dialers shall be registered with the Sheriff's Department which registration shall be made on forms prepared by the Sheriff in substantially the following form:~~

- ~~1. Name and address.~~
- ~~2. Type of protection (home or business).~~
- ~~3. Persons other than the Sheriff's Department notified by the alarm.~~
- ~~4. Keyholders (2 minimum).~~
- ~~5. Type of service requested (fire, intrusion or health).~~
- ~~6. Name and address of installer.~~
- ~~7. Name and address of service person.~~

1
2 ~~(e) All automatic dialers shall be connected to the specific phone line~~
3 ~~designated by the Sheriff's Department. Any other connection is expressly prohibited.~~

4
5 ~~(d) No automatic dialer shall be permitted unless it is provided with a backup~~
6 ~~power source in the event of emergency power failure. All automatic dialers shall be equipped to~~
7 ~~give a prerecorded message, which shall include the name and address of the person giving the~~
8 ~~notice, the type of emergency service requested and special instructions. The message shall be~~
9 ~~repeated at least twice but shall in no event exceed 20 seconds in length. At the conclusion of the~~
10 ~~message the automatic dialer shall be equipped to automatically cancel or disconnect. The~~
11 ~~Sheriff's Department is hereby authorized to approve the prerecorded message of any automatic~~
12 ~~dialer prior to installation.~~

13
14 ~~(e) False automatic dialer alarms are hereby prohibited. The provisions of~~
15 ~~sub. (6)(d)9. and 10. below shall apply to automatic dialers.~~

16
17 ~~(4) Alarms Regulated. (a) No person shall cause any alarm to be connected to the~~
18 ~~alarm station of the Sheriff's Department unless such connection receives prior written approval~~
19 ~~of the Sheriff in conformance with this section.~~

20
21 ~~(b) No person shall sell, use or cause to be used any alarm except in~~
22 ~~conformance with this section.~~

23
24 ~~(c) Alarms shall be registered with the Sheriff's Department, which~~
25 ~~registration shall be made on forms prepared by the Sheriff in substantially the form provided in~~
26 ~~subs. (3)(b) above. Private alarms which in fact do not directly or indirectly notify the general~~
27 ~~public or law enforcement personnel, and alarms owned and operated by the County or any~~
28 ~~municipality in the County are exempt from this registration requirement.~~

29
30 ~~(d) False alarms are hereby prohibited. The provisions of sub. (6)(d)9. and 10~~
31 ~~below shall apply to alarms.~~

32
33 ~~(5) Intentional False Alarms. No person shall intentionally cause the activation of an~~
34 ~~alarm knowing that no crime, fire or other emergency exists.~~

35
36 ~~(6)(AM 03 42) Sheriff's Department Central Alarm Station. (a) The Sheriff is hereby~~
37 ~~authorized to operate a central alarm station which station shall meet all Federal and State laws~~
38 ~~and regulations.~~

39
40 ~~(b) The Sheriff shall determine the number of alarm owners or lessees and~~
41 ~~type of alarms which may be connected to the alarm station.~~

42
43 ~~(c) The Sheriff shall give priority for connection to the alarm station to those~~
44 ~~persons required by Federal or State law or regulation to maintain an alarm.~~

45
46 ~~(d) All persons who apply for connection to the alarm system shall comply~~
47 ~~with the following minimum standards:~~

48
49 ~~1. Contract with the alarm company that has been selected by the~~
50 ~~Sheriff to install and maintain the annunciator panel and appurtenant equipment at the alarm~~

1 ~~station and pay the fee for connection established by the contract and the contract between~~
2 ~~Washington County and the alarm company.~~

3
4 2. ~~Pay to said alarm company the monthly service charge.~~

5 3. ~~Use alarm equipment that meets minimum UL alarm device~~
6 ~~standards.~~

7 4. ~~Pay all costs of disconnection or termination of service whether~~
8 ~~such disconnection or termination is initiated by the Sheriff or the alarm user.~~

9 5. ~~Perform testing of the alarm system in accordance with rules and~~
10 ~~procedures promulgated by the Sheriff or designee.~~

11 6. ~~Pay all expenses of termination and reconnection whenever the~~
12 ~~location of the alarm station is changed.~~

13 7. ~~Sign an agreement holding Washington County and the Sheriff's~~
14 ~~Department harmless for any and all damages or losses resulting directly or indirectly from an~~
15 ~~alarm connection terminating at the Sheriff's Department.~~

16 8. ~~Each person connected to the central alarm system in accordance~~
17 ~~with this section shall cause said system to be periodically inspected and maintained in~~
18 ~~accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.~~

19 9. ~~For various reasons false alarms for alarm systems frequently~~
20 ~~occur. Such false alarms constitute a public nuisance and must be abated. Persons connected to~~
21 ~~central alarm systems in accordance with this section shall pay within 30 days to the County a~~
22 ~~charge for false alarms responded to by the Sheriff's Department, according to the following~~
23 ~~schedule for each calendar year.~~

24
25 a. ~~First two false alarms~~ ~~no charge~~

26 b. ~~Third false alarm~~ ~~\$10.00~~

27 c. ~~Fourth false alarm~~ ~~\$25.00~~

28 d. ~~Fifth and subsequent false alarms~~ ~~\$50.00~~

29 e. ~~Ten false alarms~~ ~~Disconnection~~

30
31 10. ~~A period of 30 days will be allowed for debugging a newly~~
32 ~~installed alarm system during which false alarms will not be counted.~~

33 11. ~~Any person who applies for connection under this subsection shall~~
34 ~~relieve Washington County and Sheriff's Department of all liability as a result of any action~~
35 ~~arising from the installation of, operation of or response to any alarm, and further shall relieve~~
36 ~~Washington County and the Sheriff's Department of any liability resulting from the disconnection~~
37 ~~of any alarm from the alarm station.~~

38
39 (e) ~~Failure to comply with any provision of this section shall be cause for an~~
40 ~~alarm to be disconnected from the alarm station upon 30 days prior written notice by the Sheriff.~~
41 ~~Said disconnection shall be made at the alarm holder's expense. An order of disconnection may~~
42 ~~be appealed by filing a written notice of appeal with the County Clerk within 10 days of the date~~
43 ~~of the order. Said appeal shall be heard by the Public Safety Committee within 30 days of the~~
44 ~~date of filing the appeal. The Committee may affirm, reverse, or modify the order of the Sheriff.~~
45 ~~An appeal which is timely filed suspends the disconnection until the committee renders its~~
46 ~~decision. The County Clerk shall give written notice of the time and place of the hearing to the~~
47 ~~appellant not later than 24 hours prior to the hearing. The Sheriff may, at his or her discretion,~~
48 ~~require the immediate disconnection of any alarm connected to the alarm station if technical~~
49 ~~failure or defects of the system result in a continual or sporadic alarm.~~

1 ~~(7)(AM 03-32) Registration Fee. (a) The initial registration fee for automatic dialers and~~
2 ~~alarms shall be \$30 for the first year or any part of the year. The renewal fee shall be \$15.~~

3
4 ~~(b) Each permit shall be valid for the calendar year in which issued and shall~~
5 ~~be renewed by January 31 of each subsequent year.~~

6
7 ~~(8) Exemptions. The provisions of this section shall not apply to audible alarms~~
8 ~~affixed to motor vehicles or boats, nor shall they apply to alarms which do not emit an audible or~~
9 ~~visible signal beyond the interior of the building in which they are installed.~~

10
11 ~~(9) Penalties. Any person, firm or corporation convicted of a violation of this section~~
12 ~~shall forfeit not less than \$50 nor more than \$500 plus the costs of prosecution for each violation,~~
13 ~~and in default of payment of such forfeiture and costs shall be imprisoned in the County Jail until~~
14 ~~such forfeiture and costs are paid, such imprisonment not to exceed 90 days.~~

15
16 **SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE.** This ordinance shall become effective upon
17 passage by the Board of Supervisors and publication as provided by law.

18
19 **SECTION 3. SUMMARY.** Ordinance repealing Section 14.17 of the Washington
20 County Code.

21 _____
22
23 VOTE REQUIREMENT FOR PASSAGE: Majority

24
25 APPROVED: Introduced by members of the PUBLIC SAFETY
26 **(signed by Kimberly A. Nass)** COMMITTEE as filed with the County Clerk.

27 Kimberly A. Nass, County Attorney

28 Dated **2/14/14** **(signed by Joseph C. Gonnering)**

29 Joseph C. Gonnering, Chairperson

30 Considered **2/11/14**

31 Adopted **2/11/14**

32 Ayes **30** Noes **0** Absent **0**

33 Voice Vote _____

34
35 Countersigned:

36 _____
37 Herbert J. Tennies

38 County Board Chairperson

39
40 (The 2014 budget was approved without revenues for this purpose. The code is outdated with
41 many portions of the current communication system.)