

WINTER HAVEN

The Chain of Lakes City

Security Alarm System Control Ordinance O-08-27
Enacted June 23, 2008
(Updated December 2, 2008)

Before security alarm system activation or monitoring occurs, business and residential alarm users, or alarm companies acting on the user's behalf, must register the alarm system with the Winter Haven Police Department by applying for a non-transferable Alarm Permit and paying a single permit registration fee of \$26.35¹. Security alarm systems activated prior to June 23, 2008 must also be permitted and achieve compliance with pertinent terms and conditions of this ordinance.

A separate alarm permit must be acquired for each alarm system to be used; in the case of multiple alarm systems being used on an individual property, a separate permit must be registered for each alarm system.

Any approved and issued Alarm Permit must be updated within 30 days of any personal, contact, system or other related information changing.

An approved Alarm Permit will remain in effect until the system is no longer in use or there is a change in address, ownership or possession of the premises where an alarm system is maintained. Within 30 days of this type of transaction occurring, a new Alarm Permit application must be filed and the required registration fee paid.

After a permit is issued, the alarm user is required to:

- Maintain their premises and alarm systems in such a way that false alarms can be reduced or eliminated.
- Provide the alarm company the Alarm Permit number to aid in prompt and proper law enforcement dispatch.
- Commit to a 30-minute response to a notice of the need to deactivate an alarm, provide entry to the premises or arrange for alternative security;
- Only manually activate the alarm for its intended reason or pre-approved testing.

Alarm companies are required to:

- Be properly licensed by the state, county or city.
- Provide a 24-hour a day emergency contact.
- Commit to two-hour response to an alarm call.
- Provide alarm user subscriber and Alarm Permit information upon request.
- Within 90 days of ordinance enactment, on or before September 23, 2008, only install, re-install and use alarm control panels that meet nationally recognized and tested control panel design standards.
- Provide alarm user system operation instructions and written system service information before activating or monitoring an alarm.
- Verify an alarm signal before contacting law enforcement for dispatch.
- As soon as possible, cancel law enforcement when it is determined that police response to an alarm is unnecessary.

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It is considered unlawful for any person or company to:

- Cause a false alarm or activate an alarm system when no action requiring law enforcement response has been attempted or committed.
- Use an audible alarm system that sounds continually for more than 10 minutes.
- Install or use an automatic dial protection device that reports any recorded message to the Winter Haven Police Department.
- Fail to pay an assessed registration fee or monetary penalty.
- Violate any other provision of the Security Alarm Ordinance.

Monetary and administrative penalties for failing to obtain an Alarm Permit; having a record of four or more false alarms within a 365-day period beginning each October 1 or the use of a runaway alarm will be imposed on the basis of the below listed table.

Failure to Register-Obtain an Alarm Permit	\$105.40 ¹ each occurrence
Excessive False Alarms	
Fourth and Fifth Occurrence	\$52.70 ¹ each
Sixth and Seventh Occurrence	\$105.40 ¹ each
Eighth and Ninth Occurrence	\$263.50 ¹ each
Tenth Occurrence and Beyond	\$527 ¹ each
Runaway Alarms	Police Chief's Discretionary Discontinuation of Law Enforcement Response Service

All penalties will be imposed by Final Order sent certified via U.S. Mail and monetary penalties will be due and payable within 30 days of receipt of the Final Order. Assessed penalties may be timely appealed in writing and shall be heard through an administrative process established by the Police Chief or his designee.

Government immunity for law enforcement response is sustained.

An Alarm User Awareness Class to promote security system operations understanding and false alarm reduction education will be developed and periodically offered.

For more information, contact:

City of Winter Haven
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¹ Effective October 1 each year, all fees and monetary penalties shall be automatically indexed to inflation by applying an incremental percentage increase in an amount equivalent to the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) percentage increase promulgated for that year, but in any event shall not be less than the equivalent of a 2.5% annual adjustment.