



BURGLAR ALARMS, PANIC ALARMS AND OTHER SIMILAR ALARM SYSTEMS **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 11, Article III**

Do I need a City of Houston alarm permit?

All residents and businesses operating, using, causing or allowing the operation or use of a burglar and/or panic alarm system located within the City of Houston are required by the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 11, Article III to obtain a permit for their alarm system.

My alarm company did not tell me that I needed a permit—do I still need one?

Yes. The City is working with alarm companies and their installation teams as well as monitoring companies to educate their customers about the City's permitting requirements. Ultimately, however, it is the system owners' responsibility to obtain required permits for their alarm systems and comply with the City's Code of Ordinances.

How do I apply for an alarm permit?

The City of Houston offers three options to apply for and purchase a Residential or Non-Residential alarm permit.

You may apply:

1. Online: www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org and click the light blue "Apply & Pay Online" box.
2. In-person at:
Houston Permitting Center
1002 Washington Avenue
Houston, TX 77002
3. By mail: Fill out the convenient, fillable, PDF alarm permit application found on:
www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org under the FORMS tab or on the main page at the DOWNLOAD and PRINT box. Mail the completed application with complete payment to:
City of Houston – Burglar Alarm Administration
P.O. Box 203887, Houston, Texas 77216-3887

How often do I need to apply?

City of Houston Alarm Permit is valid for one year from the issue date and must be renewed annually prior to expiration.

Will the City send me a renewal notice?

Yes. The City will send a renewal notice forty-five days prior to the permit's expiration date.

What type of alarm permit do I need to purchase? Burglar, panic/holdup, burglar with panic/holdup/duress?

Alarm systems vary. Check with your alarm system company to verify how your alarm system is designed and configured to perform. The system owner is ultimately responsible for knowing whether the alarm system is configured to send a burglar and/or a panic/holdup/duress alarm signal.

What type of information is available on the Houston Burglar Alarm Permits website?

www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org provides a valuable resource to City of Houston alarm customers providing information on alarm system regulations, account and contact information, false alarm prevention, alarm hearing and appeal hearing processes, permit cancellation and renewal, and convenient, downloadable forms.

What if I have more than one alarm system?

Each alarm system must have a separate alarm permit. An alarm system may not be operated, used, installed or monitored to protect more than one alarm site.

What will happen if I do not purchase a permit?

It is unlawful for any person to operate or use, cause or allow the operation or use of an alarm system unless a valid alarm permit is in effect for that alarm system. If the Houston Emergency Center (HEC) or the Houston Police Department (HPD), receives an alarm notification from an alarm system that does not have a valid permit, a penalty shall be charged for each alarm notification (whether it is a false alarm or not). The HPD may refuse to respond to an alarm notification from a burglar alarm system that does not have a current and valid alarm permit.

What if the false alarm was caused by a faulty system?

The permit holder is required to maintain the alarm site in a manner that ensures proper operation or use of the alarm system. The permit holder is also required to ensure that the alarm system is maintained in a manner that will minimize the occurrence of false alarms.

Can I transfer my alarm permit to another location?

No, alarm permits are not transferable to any other person, premises, and alarm system or alarm subscriber.

The permit holder, to whom a permit is issued, is responsible for compliance with the regulations of the alarm ordinance.

Visit: www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org for additional information.

Contact:

City of Houston - Burglar Alarm Administration

P.O. Box 203887

Houston, Texas 77216-3887

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Fax: 281-779-4188