



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 24-5012, **Agenda Item #:** 7.

7/18/2024

Posting Language

Approve an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 4-2 (*Alarm Systems*) relating to alarm system regulations, authorizing director discretion for fee waivers, and changing references in the Chapter.

Lead Department

Development Services Department.

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

Prior Council Action:

March 7, 1985 - Council approved Ordinance 850307-C amending City Code to add Chapter 8-8 (*Emergency Reporting Equipment and Procedures*) on consent on Mayor Pro Tem Trevino's motion, Council Member Urdy's second on a 6-0 vote.

January 11, 2007 - Council approved Ordinance 20070111-012 amending Sections 4-2-1 and 4-2-21 of the City Code relating to alarm systems to set penalties for false burglar alarms and false personal emergency response system (panic button) alarms. The ordinance was approved on consent on Council Member Martinez's motion, Council Member McCracken's second on a 7-0 vote.

April 22, 2021 - Council approved Ordinance 20210422-053 amending City Code chapter 4-2 (*Alarm Systems*) to transfer the authority for regulating alarm permits and alarm systems from the Austin Police Department to the Development Services Department. The ordinance was approved on consent on Council Member Alter's motion, Council Member Renteria's second on an 11-0 vote.

For More Information:

Daniel Word, Assistant Director, (512) 974-6559, Daniel.Word@austintexas.gov; Michael Harrington, Division Manager, (512) 974-6460, Michael.Harrington@austintexas.gov.

Additional Backup Information:

The Alarm Administration Unit in Development Services Department recommends amending City Code Chapter (Alarm Systems) to amend requirements for alarm permits at apartment complexes. Currently the code requires that an apartment complex is required to obtain an umbrella permit for the entirety of the property in addition to acquiring individual alarm permits for each non-residential area of an apartment complex (Leasing Office, Maintenance Building, Clubhouse, etc.) which is duplicative.

To improve administration of alarms at apartment complexes, simplify the alarm permit process for apartment complexes, and reduce fees for false alarms, the Alarm Administration Unit proposes the following change:

- Instead of requiring a separate permits for each non-residential alarmed building that add costs and have different expiration dates, an apartment complex would only be required to obtain one permit (to be renamed "principal permit") for a fee of \$250 per year.
- This principal permit would cover every non-residential building with an alarm system on the property.
- Additionally, the principal permit would also cover the first false alarm response in a tenant's unit. The

tenant would still be responsible for acquiring a residential permit for subsequent alarm calls. The amended code would still allow for three “free” false alarm calls per permit. In addition, the Director of Development Services Department would have the authority to waive fees in accordance with department policy.