EAST LAMPETER TOWNSHIP
LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

ORDINANCE NO. 390 OF 2026

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST LAMPETER, LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, TO AMEND THE EAST LAMPETER TOWNSHIP CODE OF ORDINANCES, CHAPTER 90, ALARM DEVICES, TO UPDATE THE REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO FALSE ALARMS.

WHEREAS, on December 17, 1996, the Board of Supervisors of East Lampeter Township enacted Ordinance No. 192 setting forth standards and regulations for various types of intrusion, burglar, fire, and other emergency alarm devices which require response by the Police Department, a fire company, or other municipal agencies;

WHEREAS, on May 6, 2024, by Ordinance No. 371, the Township revised, codified and consolidated its ordinances, including Ordinance No. 192, such that the provisions of Ordinance No. 192, as amended, are now set forth in Chapter 90 of the East Lampeter Township Code of Ordinances; and

WHEREAS, the Township is now desirous of further amending the provisions of Chapter 90 for the purpose of clarifying and restating the standards and regulations for alarm devices.

BE AND IT IS HEREBY enacted and ordained as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 90 of the East Lampeter Township Code of Ordinances governing Alarm Devices is amended to delete Sections 90-1 through 90-9 in their entirety and replacing those sections with the following provisions:

§ 90-1 Purpose and background.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide standards and regulations for various types of intrusion, burglar, fire, and other emergency alarm devices which require response thereto by the Police Department, a fire company, or other municipal agencies, to reduce unnecessary emergency responses caused by false alarm activations, and to promote proper installation, maintenance, and operation of alarm devices.

§ 90-2 Scope.

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to any person who operates, maintains, or owns any alarm device, dial alarm, or local alarm designed to summon the police, fire company or other municipal agency to any location in response to any type of alarm signal. This chapter also applies to any person who owns commercial property equipped with an alarm device even if the person is not the owner or user of the device.

§ 90-3 Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

ALARM CONSOLE - The console or control panel of alarm devices which produces a visual or audio response or both and located within the confines of Lancaster Countywide Communications or elsewhere.

ALARM DEVICE - Any type of dial alarm, local alarm, other alarm system, or any combination thereof which actuates equipment in the alarm console providing warning of intrusion, fire, smoke, flood or other peril requiring emergency response by police or fire personnel.

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY - Any business, industrial, institutional, governmental, or non-residential property.

DIAL ALARM - A type of alarm device which uses telephone lines to transmit an alarm directly to Lancaster Countywide Communications, or other approved site.

ENFORCEMENT OFFICER - One or more persons, appointed from time to time by East Lampeter Township, to provide enforcement and administration of this chapter.

FALSE ALARM - The activation of an alarm device to which a public safety agency responds when a crime, fire or other emergency has not occurred. Alarms caused by severe weather conditions, utility or power failure beyond the control of the alarm user and alarms created by malfunctions of the alarm console at Lancaster Countywide Communications or other alarm monitoring facilities will not be considered a false alarm. The police or fire or other agency officer in charge of the response will determine if the alarm is to be considered false.

LOCAL ALARM - Any alarm device which, when actuated, produces a signal not connected to the alarm console, such as a store or home burglar alarm actuating bell or horn device.

PERSON – An individual, partnership, corporation, association or other similar entity.

§ 90-4 Commercial alarm registration.

A. All Commercial Properties equipped with an alarm device shall register the device with East Lampeter Township within 90 days of the date of this Ordinance or within 10 days of the date of installation of the alarm device. Registration information shall include owner's name and address, tenant's name and address, physical address of the Commercial Property, name and contact information for alarm service provider and monitoring company, and two emergency contact persons with phone numbers.

B. Commercial alarm registrations must be renewed annually and whenever ownership/occupant information changes.

C. Failure to register a commercial alarm device shall result in a $500.00 non-registration fee, billed in addition to any false alarm fees.

D. Registration fees for commercial alarms are as follows:

1. Initial Registration: $100.00

2. Annual Renewal: $50.00

§ 90-5 Obligation to maintain.

Each person who is the owner or occupant of a property equipped with an alarm device shall maintain such device in good condition and repair to avoid false alarms. All alarm users are responsible for ensuring proper device installation and maintenance, individuals with access are trained in operation of the device, and contact information remains current.

§ 90-6 Fees for false alarms.

A. The police, fire or other agency officer in charge of a response to an alarm device activation in a personal residence or commercial property shall determine, after investigation, if the alarm is a false alarm. All false alarm responses shall be reported to the Township with a copy of the incident report attached. The Township shall maintain a record of said false alarms on file.

B. In light of the need to fine tune a new installation, each new alarm device which is installed upon the premises of any person will be entitled to a grace period of 30 days following the date of complete installation or the first use of the alarm device, whichever first occurs, during which time no false alarm fee shall be charged against such false alarm device unless the alarm is determined to be intentional, as determined by police, fire, or other agency officer.

C. For false alarms, the Board of Supervisors prescribes the following administrative fees designated to partially offset the cost of the manpower response necessitated by false alarms:

Residential fees for false alarms:

Police and Fire – all fees are per calendar year:

i. First false alarm: $0.00;
ii. Second false alarm: $50.00;
iii. Third false alarm: $100.00;
iv. For fourth and subsequent false alarms, fees shall increase by $50.00 per incident for the balance of the calendar year.

Commercial fees for false alarms:

Police and Fire – all fees are per calendar year:

i. First false alarm: $0.00;
ii. Second false alarm: $100.00;
iii. Third false alarm: $200.00;
iv. For fourth and subsequent false alarms, fees shall increase by $100.00 per incident for the balance of the calendar year.

D. Owners and occupants of a property shall be jointly and severally liable for all false alarm fees.

E. All false alarm fees are due within thirty (30) days of the date of an invoice issued by East Lampeter Township or its duly appointed agent. Any unpaid fees after the 30-day period shall incur a 10% late fee on the outstanding balance. The Township may institute legal proceedings to collect any unpaid invoices in addition to pursuing a fine in accordance with Section 90-7 (violations and penalties) below.

F. The Board of Supervisors may revise, increase, decrease, or otherwise amend the false alarm fees and associated charges by resolution. Any resolution adopted under this section shall have the same force and effect as if the fees were written directly into this Ordinance.

§ 90-7 Audible alarms.

All alarm devices which, when activated, emit an audible alarm at or near the site of the device shall be equipped with a timing device which will automatically silence after 15 minutes after actuation of the alarm.

§ 90-8 Violations and penalties.

Any person, firm or corporation who shall violate any provision of this chapter, who incurs and fails to pay the administrative or registration fees, or who has three (3) or more false alarms within any consecutive 12-month period shall, upon conviction thereof in an action brought before a Magisterial District Judge in the manner provided for the enforcement of summary offenses under the Pennsylvania Rules of Criminal Procedure, be sentenced to pay a fine of not more than $300.00, plus costs, and, in default of payment of said fine and costs, to a term of imprisonment not to exceed ninety (90) days. Each day that a violation of this chapter continues or each section of this chapter which shall be found to have been violated shall constitute a separate offense.

§ 90-9 Inconsistencies with other enactments.

This chapter shall supersede and replace any other ordinance dealing with the imposition of administrative fees for false alarms. Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to limit or in any other way affect the provisions of Chapter 170, Article I, Automatic Sprinklers, Smoke Detectors and Fire Safety Regulations, of the Code of the Township of East Lampeter or other fire safety legislation.

Section 2. All other provisions of the East Lampeter Township Code of Ordinances shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 3. In the event any provision, section, sentence, clause, or part of this Ordinance shall be held invalid, illegal, or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such determination shall not affect or impair the validity, legality, or enforceability of the remaining provisions, sections, sentences, clauses, or parts of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the Board of Supervisors that this Ordinance would have been adopted had such invalid, illegal, or unconstitutional provision not been included herein.

Section 4. This Ordinance shall be effective on January 1, 2027.

DULY ORDAINED AND ENACTED this 16th day of NOVEMBER, 2026, by the Board of Supervisors of East Lampeter Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in lawful session duly assembled.

TOWNSHIP OF EAST LAMPETER
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Attest: _____
Secretary

By: _____
(Vice) Chairman
Board of Supervisors

[TOWNSHIP SEAL]

I, Tara A. Hitchens, Secretary of the Board of Supervisors of East Lampeter Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of an ordinance duly adopted at a legally constituted meeting of the Board of Supervisors of East Lampeter Township held on NOVEMBER 16, 2026, at which meeting a quorum was present and voted in favor thereof.

Tara A. Hitchens

Tara A. Hitchens, Secretary