TOWN OF STOWE, VERMONT
MUNICIPAL CODE
Chapter 2.5
FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS

ARTICLE 1 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 The Selectboard of the Town of Stowe hereby ordains this Fire Alarm Systems Ordinance to be in effect as of the date noted below pursuant to the authority granted under Section 202 (a), 203) and 203 of the Charter of the Town of Stowe. This Ordinance shall be a civil ordinance within the meaning of 24 V.S.A. Chapter 59.

1.2 The purpose of this Ordinance is to require:

(a) The proper operation and maintenance of all fire alarm systems within the Town of Stowe.

(b) The prevention of false alarms and system misuse to minimize emergency responses to non-emergency alarm activations or improper use of such systems.

1.3 This Ordinance shall amend in its entirety and replace an Alarm System Ordinance adopted by the Selectboard on August 11, 2003.

1.4 By adoption of this Ordinance the Town of Stowe does not assume any duty to respond to any alarm or maintain or operate any alarm equipment or to take any other action in connection therewith.

ARTICLE 2 DEFINITIONS

2.1 The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this Ordinance, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this Article, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning. Other words, terms and phrases shall have the meanings ascribed by Vermont law or in the event no legal definition exists, their customary and usual meaning.

(a) *Alarm System* shall mean any mechanism or device that is used in a building or premises for the detection of fire, heat or smoke, sprinkler activation or the presence of carbon monoxide or some other health hazard that is designed to transmit a signal directly to the Fire Department or to a dispatch center which notifies the Fire Department by telephonic communication.

(b) *Alarm System Owner and/or User* ("Owner" herein) shall mean any person, partnership, firm, association, cooperative, corporation or any other entity in control of any building, structure, premises or facility in which an alarm system exists.

(c) *Chief* shall mean the Chief of the Stowe Fire Department.

(d) *Department* shall mean the Stowe Fire Department.

(e) *False Alarm* shall mean any alarm signal that results in a request or automatically elicits a response by the Department when there is not a situation requiring such a response. An alarm signal caused by a power outage, violent conditions of nature or other extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the owner shall not constitute a false alarm.

(f) *Lock Boxes* shall mean a Fire Department approved locked box located on the exterior of an automated fire alarm monitored building which contains keys to access the building.

ARTICLE 3 ALARM SYSTEM REGULATIONS

3.1 Registration - Within the Town of Stowe, all alarm system owners shall annually provide the Chief, on forms provided by the Town, with written information identifying the name, address and telephone number of the alarm system owner. The E911 home number will be posted at the end of the driveway in reflective 4" numbers and letters.

3.2 Prohibited Devices – No owner shall install or operate an alarm system that transmits a pre-recorded message directly to the Department requesting a response.

3.3 Exemptions - Buildings owned by the Town of Stowe or the Stowe School District shall be exempt from the fees and penalties set forth herein.

3.4 Alarm Activations - An alarm system owner shall be responsible for any and all alarms generated by the system under his/her control.

3.5 Lock boxes are required on all buildings that have an automated fire alarm monitoring system.

ARTICLE 4 VIOLATIONS

4.1 It shall be a violation of this Ordinance for any owner to install a prohibited device as described in Section 3.2.

4.2 Except as provided below, the occurrence of a false alarm shall constitute a violation of this Ordinance. However, no violation will be considered to have taken place as a result false alarm when such alarm is the first false alarm on a property within any established six month period. For the purpose of this

Ordinance, there shall be two six month periods, one commencing on January 1 and the other on July 1 of each calendar.

4.3 It shall be a violation of this Ordinance for any alarm system owner to reset, manually silence or otherwise tamper with an activated alarm system until such time as authorized by a Fire Officer, except when conducting alarm system maintenance or testing or while performing some other activity that is likely to activate a false alarm, provided, however, the owner gives prior notice to its monitoring company (if applicable) and the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department.

ARTICLE 5 ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

5.1 The Chief, Town of Stowe, or designee from the Department shall act as issuing municipal officials and collect the following fines for false alarms of the same nature:

a. Second false alarm within a six month period: $100.00
b. Third false alarm within a six month period: $250.00
c. Fourth false alarm and every one there after within a six month period: $500.

5.2 The Town may enforce this Ordinance in any manner authorized by law and seek to obtain any lawful relief, including, without limitation, injunctive relief, fines or damages.

5.3 A violation of this Ordinance may also constitute a violation of 13 VSA §1751-1754 which is subject to prosecution as a criminal act.

ARTICLE 6 SEVERABILITY AND RECESSION

6.1 In the event any portion of this Ordinance is found to be invalid or void by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall continue to be in full force and effect.

6.2 This Ordinance may be rescinded by a Town Meeting vote in accordance with the provisions of Section 204 (d) of the Charter of the Town of Stowe.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this ALARM SYSTEMS ORDINANCE is hereby approved and adopted by Selectboard of the Town of Stowe, on this, the 15th day of August, 2005; to be effective as of the 15th day of August, 2005; whereby a first reading of this Ordinance was held at a duly warned open meeting of the Selectboard on May 9 2005, an advertisement for a public hearing to consider this Ordinance was published in the *Stowe Reporter* on August 11 2005, and a second reading and Public Hearing was held at a duly warned open meeting of the Selectboard on Aug 15 2005, as prescribed in Section 204 of the Stowe Town Charter.

ATTEST:

The Stowe Selectboard:

Theodore J. Teffner, Chairman

Charles T. Lusk, Selectboard Member

Heidi Scheuermann, Vice Chairman

Steven N. Riley, Selectboard Member

Richard C. Marron, Selectboard Member

UNDER SEAL OF THE TOWN, received, filed and recorded on this 29th day of September, 2005 at 3:35pm.; ATTEST:

Office of the Town Clerk