

**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 who operate, use, cause or allow the operation or use of a burglar and/or panic alarm system located within the City of Houston are required by ordinance 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 Ordinance.

**How often do I need to apply?**

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

**How do I apply?**

To apply for a permit and learn more about the City of Houston's Burglar Alarm Administration, please visit: <https://www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org>. Alarm system owners may also apply in person at the Houston Permitting Center, 1002 Washington Avenue, Houston 77002.

**What type of alarm permit do I need? Burglar, panic, combo burglar/panic?**

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 holdup/panic alarm or duress signal.

**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, 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, all alarm permits are not transferable to any other person, premises, 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. To apply for a permit and to view the ordinance, please visit:**

**<https://www.houstonburglaralarmpermits.org>**