Town
Of
Stratton

REGULATION OF PRIVATE FIRE ALARM AND SECURITY GATE SYSTEMS (CIVIL)

Adopted by the Board of Selectmen
On this 13th Day of July, 2026

Albert Dupell, Chair

Lawrence Bills

Christopher Liller

Greg Marcucci

Boomer Walker

David Kent Young, Town Clerk
Date: July 14, 2026

Effective date: September 11, 2026

AUTHORITY: 24 VSA, 1971(b)

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The Select board of the Town of Stratton hereby ordain:

A. Statement of Purpose:

This ordinance is enacted to mandate responsible use by those protected by automatic fire alarm systems and security gate systems. Responsible use includes maintaining equipment so that it is not susceptible to false alarms by system failure.

B. Definitions:

1. "Automatic Fire Alarm System" shall mean any mechanism or device that is used in a building or premises for the detection of fire and which is designed to transmit to any receiving station a signal, message, warning, or other indication of an occurrence requiring fire department response.

2. "Automatic Fire Alarm System User" shall mean any person, partnership, firm, association, cooperation, corporation, or any other entity in control of any building, structure, premises, or facility wherein an automatic fire alarm system is installed, operated, or maintained.

3. "Chief" shall mean the Chief of the Stratton Mountain Volunteer Fire Company Inc.

4. "Company" shall mean the Stratton Mountain Volunteer Fire Company Inc., or any of its members operating on its behalf.

5. "False Alarm" shall mean any alarm signal eliciting a response by fire personnel when the situation requiring such a response does not in fact exist. An alarm signal caused by violent conditions of nature or other extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the User does not constitute a false alarm.

6. "Fire Alarm Registration" shall mean the documentation required by the Fire Company to register a Fire Alarm System.

7. "Hold Open Interface" shall mean a device that will open an automatic gate and hold it open.

8. "Knox Box" shall mean a lock box with a key to access a building. For security reasons, access to the box is radio released by a central dispatch service.

9. "Knox Lock Key Switch" shall mean a key switch to open the gate. For security reasons, access to the lock is radio released by a central dispatching service.

10. "On-site Alarm System" shall mean any mechanism or device which, when activated, caused an audible or visual signal to be activated only in or on the premises wherein the system is installed, operated, and/or maintained.

11. "Preventable fire alarm" shall mean the activation of any fire protection or alarm system which results in the response of the Fire Company and is caused by malfunction, improper maintenance, negligence, or misuse, of the system by an owner, occupant, employee, or agent, or any other activation not caused by excessive heat, smoke, fire or similar activating event.

12. "Security Gate" shall mean any manual or mechanically operated device controlling vehicular traffic on any road, drive, or other access.

13. "Siren Activated Opener" shall mean an automatic opener that will recognize a "yelp" tone from a siren and open a gate.

14. " Service Charge" shall mean the monetary charge payable to the Town of Stratton to defray the expenses of implementing the purposes of this ordinance.

C. Prohibited Alarms:

1. It is unlawful to install, operate, or maintain a fire alarm system that transmits via telephone line directly to dispatch a prerecorded message requesting a response by the company.

D. False Alarm/Preventable Alarm Procedure Service Charges, Fees and Collection:

1. An automatic fire alarm system user shall be responsible for all false alarms generated by his/her system or devices.

2. The Town shall charge and collect from the automatic fire alarm system user the following fees for false alarms:

   a. Each automatic fire alarm user shall be entitled to one (1) false alarm during a Twelve (12) month period, without being assessed a fee.
   b. Twelve-month periods shall begin on January 1st of each year.
   c. Second and subsequent false alarms within the twelve months shall result in a service charge of two hundred dollars ($200.00) each.
   d. Preventable alarms resulting in accidental activation of alarm system when reasonable steps were not taken to prevent Fire Company response and shall result in a service charge of two hundred dollars ($200.00) each.
   e. Preventable alarms shall include but not be limited to work such as system testing, Fire drills, painting, welding, cooking, cleaning, sanding, and activation for nonemergency situations that do not warrant Fire Company response.
   d. Under no circumstances will the Fire Company respond to "Lock Out" situations for structures.

3. Appeals: The User shall have the right to appeal, within ten (10) days of receipt of notice, to the Town of Stratton Selectmen, whose decision is final.

4. Payment of Fees and Charges: All fees must be paid within ten (10) days of receipt of notice unless an appeal is filed with the Stratton Board of Selectmen.

E. Registration of Automatic Fire Alarm Systems:

1. Any automatic fire alarm system user who owns, operates, or maintains an automatic fire alarm system within the Town of Stratton shall provide to the Chief written information which contains the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the alarm system provider and at least three (3) persons who can be notified to install, repair or service the alarm system and secure the premises within one hour during any hour of the day or night that the alarm might be activated. The alarm system user shall also provide, in writing, full directions to the premises and all other pertinent information regarding the premises. The alarm system user shall also have installed on the dwelling a Knox Box. This Knox Box will be mounted between five and six feet from the ground and within eighteen (18) inches on either side of the main entrance. In the event that the automatic fire alarm system user has contracted with a local service provider that responds to the scene and takes responsibility for the repair or service of the automatic fire alarm system within one hour, the requirement to designate three persons to respond shall be waived.

2. Large structures may be required to mount large Knox Boxes capable of holding floor plans and other necessary information at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

3. Multi-unit structures shall be required to use a master key system on all locked doors to expedite building searches and minimize need for changing keys. These structures may also be required to provide multiple keys at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

4. Keys shall be locked in the Knox box by the Fire Chief or authorized representative when Knox Box is properly installed and all keys are available. Multiple trips to the same residence or structure in a calendar year to change keys or add keys shall result in a service charge. Each trip shall constitute a separate service charge.

5. The automatic fire alarm system user shall promptly notify the Chief, in writing, of any changes in this information.

F. Registration of Knox Boxes:

1. Each freestanding building within the Town of Stratton having an automatic fire alarm system, shall be equipped with a Knox Box keyed for use by the Stratton Mountain Volunteer Fire Company, Inc.

2. All commercial and industrial properties within the Town protected by fences, gates and related barriers presently secured by a padlock, electronically operated or automatic gates, or other control circuits, shall be equipped with a Knox Box as approved by the Fire Chief.

3. Location: The Knox Box shall be located eighteen inches on either side of the main entrance to the building or property. It shall be mounted at a height of between five and six feet above final grade, or as designated by the Fire Chief.

4. Knox Box Contents: The key lock box shall contain stamp labeled keys, easily identified in the field to provide access into the property and/or building, and to any locked areas within the said building as may further be directed by the Fire Chief.

5. The automatic fire alarm system user shall promptly notify the Chief, in writing, of any changes in this information.

6. Compliance: All existing buildings shall comply with the provisions of this Ordinance within six (6) months of its effective date. All newly constructed buildings, not yet occupied, or buildings currently under construction, shall comply with the terms hereof prior to the issuance of the permit of occupancy.

7. Effective Date: This Ordinance shall take effect upon final adoption and publication according to law.

8. Knox Box Purchase: Order information and purchases can be available and accomplished through knoxbox.com. Additional information can be found on the "Town of Stratton" website.

G. Registration of Security Gate Systems

1. Any security gate user within the Town of Stratton shall provide written notification to the Chief prior to installation. (Before being put into use, the Siren Activated Opener, the Knox Key Switch, and the Hold Open Interface shall be installed and in working order.)

2. Each security gate system within the Town of Stratton, residential or commercial, shall be equipped with a Siren Activated Opener, a Knox Key Switch or Knox Padlock keyed for use by the Stratton Mountain Volunteer Fire Company, Inc..

3. The Siren Activated Opener or Key Switch shall be used in conjunction with an Emergency Hold Open Interface.

4. Compliance: All existing security gate systems shall comply with the provisions of this Ordinance within six (6) months of its effective date (effective upon final adoption and publication according to law).

H. Audible On-Site Alarms:

Audible on-site alarms which may be heard in any public place shall be equipped and maintained to shut off automatically no longer than sixty (60) minutes after being activated. All alarms that are not in conformance with this section on the effective date of this ordinance must come into compliance no later than six (6) months after that date.

I. Notifications and Leaving the Scene

The Fire Company shall leave the scene after making a reasonable attempt to notify the individual, company, occupant, owner, alarm company or agent for the occupant or owner that the alarm system is out of service.

Notification of the alarm company shall be deemed sufficient if no responsible party is on site.

Recommendations:

Single family homes should have their automatic fire alarm systems certified once per year.

K. Enforcement:

1. A violation of this ordinance shall be a civil matter enforced in accordance with the provisions of 24 VSA 1974a and 1977 et seq.. A civil penalty of $200.00 may be imposed for each violation of this civil ordinance within a six-month period. The waiver fee shall be set at $100.00 for the first offense, $150.00 for the second offense within a six-month period, and $175.00 for all subsequent offenses within a six-month period. Each day that the violation continues will constitute a separate violation of this ordinance.

2. The Town of Stratton may proceed by a suit in a court of competent jurisdiction to collect the service charge after demand has been made by the Town and the Payment thereof has not been remitted.

L. Compliance:

All existing buildings and or security gates shall comply with this Ordinance within six (6) months of its effective date. All newly constructed buildings, not yet occupied or buildings currently under construction, or newly built security gates shall comply immediately.

M. Liability of Town:

The Town's regulation of automatic fire alarm systems and security gate systems shall not constitute acceptance by the Town of Stratton of any liability to maintain any equipment, to answer alarms, or to take any other action in connection therewith.

N. Severability:

If any section, subsection, or any part thereof, is for any reason held to be invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity or effectiveness of the remaining portions of this ordinance or any part thereof.

Repeal of Prior Ordinances

Any other Regulation of Private Fire Alarm Systems heretofore adopted by the Town of Stratton are hereby repealed.

Stratton Mountain
Volunteer Fire Company Inc.

5 Brazers Way, Stratton Mountain, VT 05155 (802) 297-2950

Automatic Fire Alarm / Security Gate Registration Form: Date: _____

Owners' Name: _____

Local Address: Street: _____ House # _____

City: _____ State _____

Phone #: (_____) _____ Zip: _____

Permanent Address: Street: _____ House # _____

City: _____ State _____

Phone #: (_____) _____ Zip: _____

Local Automatic Alarm Service Provider:

Name of Company: _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Caretaker: Name: _____ Phone: _____

Three other persons able to install, repair or service the alarm system and secure the premises, within one hour, during any hour of the day or night that the alarm might be activated. (If you have a local alarm service provider, these three names are waived).

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Please use the back of this form to provide full directions to the premises and all other pertinent information regarding the premises.