

**GREENWICH TOWNSHIP
BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-01

AN ORDINANCE OF GREENWICH TOWNSHIP, BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA REGULATING FALSE ALARMS BY: ESTABLISHING CRITERIA FOR PERSONS SUBJECT TO THE ORDINANCE AND CIRCUMSTANCES CONSTITUTING A FALSE ALARM; SETTING FORTH PENALTIES FOR ONE OR MORE FALSE ALARMS WITHIN ANY ROLLING TWELVE MONTH PERIOD; AND REQUIRING ANNUAL INSPECTIONS AND THE REMEDIATION OF ANY CAUSE PROMPTING A FALSE ALARM.

WHEREAS, Greenwich Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania (“Township”) is a township of the second class operating pursuant to the Second Class Township Code, 53 P.S. 65101, *et seq.*;

WHEREAS, the Township is experiencing and expects to experience additional commercial and industrial development given that Interstate 78 bisects the jurisdiction;

WHEREAS, the proposed and existing commercial and industrial development pose a fire hazard that jeopardizes the health, safety, and welfare of the Township’s residents, and are or will be monitored by fire alarms, respectively;

WHEREAS, the Township’s fire protection and prevention services are limited as it does not have a public or voluntary fire company within its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the Township thus seeks to preserve the resources and timely response of such services by, among other provisions, imposing penalties and mandating remedial action in the event of false alarms to ensure that they do not occur frequently.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED by the Board of Supervisors of Greenwich Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania as follows:

SECTION 1. Title. This Ordinance shall be known as the “Greenwich Township False Alarm Ordinance.”

SECTION 2. Definitions. The terms below shall have the following meanings when used in this Ordinance:

Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA): A system of controls and devices automatically detecting fire, smoke, heat, or carbon monoxide that then transmits a signal of the same to an alarm monitoring company, emergency communications center, or other third party outside of a structure.

Burn-In Period: A fifteen (15) calendar day period, which starts on the date that the AFA is online, where enforcement of this Ordinance is waived for no more than two (2) False Alarms to allow system calibration, so long as the Township

has at least five (5) business days' prior written notice of the date that it will go online.

Excluded Alarm(s): The activation of an AFA caused by an act of God, a utility power surge, a 'good intent' call where a Person believed in good faith that an emergency situation existed but did not, another circumstance deemed excusable by the Board of Supervisors of Greenwich Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania in its reasonable discretion, or any installation, maintenance, update, repair, replacement, or testing where a Person gives reasonable, prior written notice to the Township, alarm monitoring company, and emergency communications center.

False Alarm(s): The activation of an AFA resulting in a response by any fire department or emergency service provider where an emergency situation does not exist but for the Burn-In Period or an Excluded Alarm. They include but are not limited to those caused by improper installation, maintenance, update, repair, replacement, or testing where notice is not given, mechanical failure or malfunction, or other negligent or intentional act or omission by any party.

Person: Any party that owns real property in Greenwich Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania that has an AFA in connection with any commercial or industrial use.

SECTION 3. Operation.

- A.) Contact Information. A Person shall maintain at least three (3) emergency contacts with the alarm monitoring company for the AFA.
- B.) Testing. A Person shall have the AFA inspected at least once per calendar year by a certified fire alarm technician. Proof of the same shall be provided by a Person to the Township upon request.
- C.) Functioning. A Person shall ensure that any external alarm of the AFA contains an automatic shut-off feature after a period of twenty (20) minutes has elapsed from the time of first activation.
- D.) Reporting. Any fire department serving any portion of Greenwich Township shall notify the Township in writing of each and every instance of a False Alarm in Greenwich Township. Such notice shall include the date and time of the False Alarm, the address of the property where it occurred, and the reason therefor, if known.

SECTION 4. Penalties for False Alarms. A Person shall be subject to the following Table of Penalties for False Alarms:

Number of False Alarms within any Rolling Twelve Month Period	Criminal Penalty
First False Alarm	Warning

Second False Alarm	\$300.00
Third False Alarm	\$500.00
Fourth False Alarm	\$750.00
Fifth and Additional False Alarm(s)	\$1,000.00

A Person shall satisfy any penalty imposed under this Section within thirty (30) days of the Township mailing an invoice.

SECTION 5. Remediation. In the event of a False Alarm, a Person shall have the obligation to identify the cause or other source of the False Alarm, remediate it, and provide proof of the same to the Township upon request.

SECTION 6. Enforcement. As an Ordinance regulating fire and public safety, the Board of Supervisors of Greenwich Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania shall enforce this Ordinance by action brought before a district justice in the same manner provided for the enforcement of summary offenses under the Pennsylvania Rules of Criminal Procedure. The municipal solicitor may assume charge of the prosecution without the consent of the District Attorney as required under Pa.R.Crim.P. No. 83(c) (relating to trial in summary cases). Unless otherwise set forth in this Ordinance, a conviction of a violation of this Ordinance is punishable by criminal fine not to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per violation. In addition to any criminal fine(s), the Township may also recover attorneys' fees and expenses, and court costs for any violation necessitating enforcement under this Section.

SECTION 7. Repealer. Any provision, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of any ordinance conflicting with any provision, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Ordinance is hereby repealed insofar as they are inconsistent.

SECTION 8. Severability. If any provision, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Ordinance is declared to be illegal, unconstitutional or invalid by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect or otherwise impair the validity of this Ordinance as a whole, or any other provision, sentence, clause, phrase, or word within the Ordinance. The Board of Supervisors of Greenwich Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania, hereby declares that it would have enacted the within Ordinance and each provision, sentence, clause, phrase, or word without the provision, sentence, clause, phrase, or word declared illegal, unconstitutional or invalid.

SECTION 9. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective at the earliest possible date permitted by law.

DULY ENACTED AND ORDAINED as an Ordinance of Greenwich Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania on this _____ day of _____, 2026.

**GREENWICH TOWNSHIP,
BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Dean Spohn, Chairman

Victor Berger, Vice Chairman

Carl Dunn, Member

Attest: _____
Diane Hollenbach, Secretary

MUNICIPAL CERTIFICATION

I, Diane Hollenbach, Township Administrator, certify that this is a true and correct copy of the Ordinance enacted by the Board of Supervisors of Greenwich Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania on _____, 2026.

Diane Hollenbach, Administrator