

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF CENTRAL SAANICH

**BYLAW NO. 2247, 2025**

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A Bylaw to establish the responsibilities of real property owners in relation to fire alarm systems and to establish fees for services to false alarms attended by the Central Saanich Fire Department.

WHEREAS Section 196(1) of the Community Charter provides that Council may establish fees to be paid by the owner or occupier of real property to which Fire services are provided in response to a false alarm of a fire alarm system;

AND WHEREAS excessive numbers of false alarms are being permitted to occur by the owners or users of fire alarm systems;

AND WHEREAS these false alarms require emergency responses from Fire that pose a threat to the safety of Fire department members and members of the public by creating unnecessary hazards and delaying the Fire response to true emergencies;

AND WHEREAS under Section 8(6) of the Community Charter the Council may regulate the carrying on of business in the municipality for the purpose of protecting the public or preventing or minimizing nuisances;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of The District of Central Saanich in open meeting assembled enacts as follows:

**Definitions**

1 In this Bylaw,

**“false alarm”** means the activation of a fire alarm system or an integrated fire/home security system as a result of which services, including Fire services, are provided on behalf of the District of Central Saanich and the providers of the service do not find any unauthorized entry or commission of an unlawful act or any evidence of fire, fire damage, smoke in relation to the building, structure, residence or facility, or where there has been no emergency situation. False alarm incidents include but are not limited to:

The testing of an alarm which results in a Fire response;

- i) An alarm actually or apparently activated by mechanical failure, malfunction or faulty equipment;
- ii) An alarm activated by user error;
- iii) An alarm reporting a fire or an emergency situation occurring on or in relation to the address in which the alarm system is installed where no evidence exists or where no such event took place;

**“fire and fire department”** shall mean the Central Saanich Fire Department;

**"fire alarm system"** means a device or devices installed on or in real property and designed to issue a warning of a fire by activating an audible alarm signal or alerting a monitoring service but does not include a fire alarm system that is intended to alert only the occupants of a single family dwelling unit in which it is installed;

**"monitoring service"** means a person, partnership or company engaged in the business of monitoring alarm systems and reporting the occurrence of alarms to the Fire department;

### **Owner's Responsibilities**

- 2 The owner or occupier of real property shall be responsible for the proper use, installation, maintenance and operations of any fire alarm system installed on or in the real property in order to ensure the prevention of false alarms.

### **Owner's Responsibilities – Designated References**

- 3(1) Every owner or occupier of real property who uses a fire alarm system must, within 72 hours of the installation of the system, keep the Fire Department informed by notice in writing of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of:
  - (a) A Monitoring Service, if applicable; or
  - (b) At least two persons who will be known as Property References who may be contacted in the event of an alarm incident.
- (2) The Fire Department are to be informed of any changes to the Monitoring Service or Property Reference contact information of real property by notice in writing of the names, addresses and telephone numbers within 72 hours of those changes.

### **Fees**

- 4(1) The owner or occupier of real property to which the services of the Fire Department are provided in response to a false alarm shall pay to the District of Central Saanich, the following fees:
  - a) If in any 12 month period the Fire Department responds to three (3) false alarms originated from one alarm system, the Fire Chief shall cause a notice to be sent to the occupier of the property in which the alarm system is installed advising of the occurrence of the false alarms and of the consequences which may arise if further false alarms occur.
  - b) If in any 12 month period the Fire Department responds to four (4) or more false alarms originating from one alarm system, there shall be imposed on the occupier of the property in which the alarm system is installed a fee of \$200.00 for the fourth and each subsequent false alarm.
  - c) Any fees imposed under this Bylaw shall be due and payable within 45 days of invoice and, if not paid on December 31st of the year in which they are imposed, shall be added to and form part of the taxes payable on the real property as taxes in arrears.
  - d) There shall be imposed upon the Owner or Occupier of the property at which a false fire alarm incident has occurred the following standby fee in any case where the designated property reference fails to attend within 30 minutes of notification and no lockbox is available for access. Where any Apparatus is required to provide the services, the Department will charge the rate for the Apparatus and crews involved as set from time to time by the BC Wildfire Service and the Fire Chiefs' Association of British Columbia, in the "Inter-Agency Operational Procedures and

Rates" document (the "Provincial Rates Document"), in relation to responses by structural firefighting departments to provincial emergencies. If the Provincial Rates Document is discontinued or has not been updated in the preceding 36 months, or does not cover the type of Apparatus provided, the Fire Chief, acting reasonably, will establish a rate based on the apparatus and members assigned.

- e) In the event that Fire officers cause forced entry to the premises due to the false alarm, all costs incurred to secure the building will be imposed on the occupier of the property.

**Appeal**

5(1) The Owner or Occupier of premises may appeal the validity of a determination that an alarm was false by submitting a notice in writing to the Fire Chief within 10 days of being notified of the determination of a false alarm. The Fire Chief may:

- a) Conduct an internal investigation;
- b) Attempt to resolve the appeal informally with the occupier;
- c) Convene a hearing;
- d) Receive written or oral submissions from the occupier; and shall determine whether the alarm was false

5(2) The determination by the Fire Chief under this Section, of whether an alarm was false, shall be final and conclusive for all purposes.

5(3) The Fire Chief may delegate his responsibility under this Section to another Officer in the Fire Department.

Any person who violates any provision of this Bylaw is guilty of an offence and liable upon summary conviction to a fine of not less than \$150.00.

**Citation**

6. This Bylaw may be cited for all purposes as "False Alarm Bylaw No. 2247, 2025."

READ A FIRST TIME this	8 <sup>th</sup>	day of	October	, 2025
READ A SECOND TIME this	8 <sup>th</sup>	day of	October	, 2025
READ A THIRD TIME this	8 <sup>th</sup>	day of	October	, 2025
ADOPTED this	14 <sup>th</sup>	day of	October	, 2025

  
Ryan Windsor, Mayor

  
Eonille Gorman, Corporate Officer



