



Bald Head Association ~ “The voice for BHI property owners”

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# BHI Questions?

## Fire Alarms

Mother Nature has been active this summer, with many thunderstorms on and around Bald Head Island. Lightning can be awe-inspiring to watch from a distance but not so much when it's in your immediate area. Though we know to move indoors for safety during a thunderstorm, there can be additional consequences from storms. Lightning strikes and power fluctuations can also affect home fire and security alarms, sometimes causing false and faulty alarms. False and faulty alarms are responded to by the Public Safety Department. YTD 2021, Public Safety personnel have responded to 62 false alarms and 12 faulty alarms.

BHA encourages property owners to check their fire alarms to ensure they are working properly and, most importantly, that a monitoring service is used (which is required by Village Ordinance). Without a fire alarm system being monitored, there is no notification to Public Safety to respond with assistance. Fires on BHI are especially dangerous, being a barrier Island with ocean winds and surrounded by nearby properties. BHA encourages all homeowners to have adequate power surge protection and battery backup for their fire alarm system in order to prevent danger from fire.

As a homeowner on BHI, you can choose to have your fire alarm monitored by a land line, an Internet phone connection or by cellular network (GSM — Global System Mobile communicator). Whichever method you choose, if that system goes down for any reason, your system is not being monitored. There may be a benefit of choosing to have your fire alarm system monitored via a cellular network, simply because historical data shows less system downtime compared with other connections. But note, nothing is guaranteed 100%. There are pros and cons to each option, so discuss details with your security provider and insurance carrier.

The Village ordinance that requires monitored smoke detectors was established in 1994 and had an amendment in 2008.

Are you a property owner who has not recently visited your BHI property? Ensure that your fire and security alarms are working properly — contact your security company. Also, ensure that your smoke alarms are in good working order with new batteries.

Remember, there is no safe place outside when thunderstorms are in the area. Lightning can strike up to 10-12 miles from its source. If you hear thunder, you are likely within striking distance of the storm. “When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors” is the slogan to heed.