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Ohio Revised Code

Section 2917.32 Making false alarms.

Effective: April 12, 2021
Legislation: Senate Bill 33 - 133rd General Assembly

(A) No person shall do any of the following:

(1) Initiate or circulate a report or warning of an alleged or impending fire, explosion, crime, or other catastrophe, knowing that the report or warning is false and likely to cause public inconvenience or alarm;

(2) Knowingly cause a false alarm of fire or other emergency to be transmitted to or within any organization, public or private, for dealing with emergencies involving a risk of physical harm to persons or property;

(3) Report to any law enforcement agency an alleged offense or other incident within its concern, knowing that such offense did not occur;

(4) Initiate or circulate a report or warning of an alleged or impending fire, explosion, crime, or other catastrophe, knowing that the report or warning is false and likely to impede the operation of a critical infrastructure facility.

(B) This section does not apply to any person conducting an authorized fire or emergency drill.

(C)(1) Whoever violates this section is guilty of making false alarms.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in division (C)(3), (4), (5), or (6) of this section, making false alarms is a misdemeanor of the first degree.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in division (C)(4) of this section, if a violation of this section results in economic harm of one thousand dollars or more but less than seven thousand five hundred dollars, making false alarms is a felony of the fifth degree.

(4) If a violation of this section pertains to a purported, threatened, or actual use of a weapon of mass destruction, making false alarms is a felony of the third degree.

(5) If a violation of this section results in economic harm of seven thousand five hundred dollars or more but less than one hundred fifty thousand dollars and if division (C)(4) of this section does not apply, making false alarms is a felony of the fourth degree.

(6) If a violation of this section results in economic harm of one hundred fifty thousand dollars or more, making false alarms is a felony of the third degree.

(D)(1) It is not a defense to a charge under this section that pertains to a purported or threatened use of a weapon of mass destruction that the offender did not possess or have the ability to use a weapon of mass destruction or that what was represented to be a weapon of mass destruction was not a weapon of mass destruction.

(2) Any act that is a violation of this section and any other section of the Revised Code may be prosecuted under this section, the other section, or both sections.

(E) As used in this section:

(1) "Critical infrastructure facility" has the same meaning as in section 2911.21 of the Revised Code.

(2) "Economic harm" and "weapon of mass destruction" have the same meanings as in section 2917.31 of the Revised Code.