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For applications, alarm
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www.deerparktx.gov

**HELPING TO PREVENT
FALSE ALARMS**



**A Courtesy
Informational Guide for
Alarm System Operators**

WHAT CAUSES FALSE ALARMS?

In today's society, protection of ones personal and business assets and the ability to summon an emergency response is a top priority.

Alarm systems, whether monitored by a private service provider or a basic local alarm sounding activation system, are one method of defense. Alarm service providers offer additional services such as summoning medical emergency assistance, especially for the elderly or others in need.

Regardless of your system type or services provided, you have made a costly financial investment in your security and sense of well being.

In addition to your equipment, installation and monthly monitoring costs, many local jurisdictions require an alarm user permit fee, and assess fees for excessive False Alarms.

The City of Deer Park requires an annual renewal permit fee for both businesses and residences. The ordinance has an escalating tiered fee schedule in excess of (3) false alarms during a twelve month period.

Additional costs of false alarm responses are the effective use of manpower, equipment and public/responder SAFETY, while en route or after arrival on the scene, and apathy from a crying wolf type of syndrome.

National statistics cite between 97-99 % of all alarm calls received by police are false, thus are largely preventable.

Alarms such as burglary, fire, holdup or medical emergency are presumed to be false absent evidence to the contrary. Medical alarm activations are not considered billable.

False Alarms are both non-preventable and preventable.

The non-preventable alarms are typically due to violent conditions of nature (typically are not isolated to one site location) or other extraordinary circumstances such as a short term mechanical failure, which is corrected within (2) days and does not reoccur within one year. Generally these are not considered as billable false alarms but supporting documentation must be presented, if requested.

Preventable causes include, but are not limited to:

1. Improper or poor equipment selection and/or installation by installer/technician/user.
2. Alarm company error (dispatch to wrong jurisdiction), which seldom occurs.
3. Alarm System User Error (Most Common).
 - A. Lack of training in the operation of the system.
 - B. Forgotten or incorrect entered pass code.
 - C. Delay in entry or exit from egress door before/after disarming/arming systems access code.
 - D. Leaving doors or windows unsecured or opening when system is armed.
 - E. Performing system testing by tech/user.
4. Improper maintenance/cleaning of system sensors, ac/heater ducts or battery back-up.
5. Allowing pets to fly or roam in monitored areas or failure to remove wild animals, rodents or insects and prevent access into the area.

Clearly the alarm system user has the ability to minimize false alarms and is responsible.

HELPING PREVENT FALSE ALARMS

State law requires that alarm companies upon installation/activation of a system, provide the user with information on the system use and the prevention of false alarms.

In the equipment selection and installation, the user should discuss their security needs with the tech/installer. You should discuss your pets to determine a suitable system. Are motion detectors the right choice for you?

You should become thoroughly familiar with your system, ask the tech/installer questions until understood; and read the instructions and brochures provided.

Communicate with your monitoring service an agreed upon Alarm Verification Procedure, and keep a current emergency contact list on file with the monitoring company. This procedure should take no longer than (5) minutes to determine if a police dispatch is needed Before they call the police for dispatch.

Establish residence/business alarm procedures; and TRAIN all authorized users on the causes and your procedures for false alarm prevention.

Do not allow testing or repair of your system by a tech or other individual, without first notifying your monitoring company and directing a non police response, in order to prevent a possible charge of false report.

A conscious effort on the part of alarm users should greatly reduce false alarms and save unnecessary costs.

The Deer Park Police wish to thank the responsible alarm system operators for their help in reducing False Alarms.