

HOW CAN YOU PREVENT FALSE ALARMS?

1. Before activating your system . . .
 - Lock all protected doors and windows.
 - Keep pets, balloons, fans, heaters, plants, curtains, seasonal decorations, etc. away from motion sensor areas.
 - Know how to cancel the alarm if the system activates.
2. Educate alarm system users . . .
 - All users, key holders or any person with legal access to your property must be thoroughly trained in how to operate your system, including knowledge of correct arming codes, pass codes, telephone numbers and procedures for canceling accidental alarm activations.
3. Have your security company check and service your system regularly . . .
 - Routine maintenance can help prevent many false alarms.
4. Notify your security company if . . .
 - You think your system isn't working properly.
 - You plan any remodeling, including replacing doors or windows, hanging drywall, sanding floors, installing attic flooring or basement ceiling, changing phone systems, installing intercoms, siding, ceiling fans or skylights, fumigating, installing wiring for cable or other electronics, installing anything near the system control panel or keypads.
 - You hire domestic help, get a new pet, plan to sell your house, or are testing your system.
5. Contact your jurisdiction's Alarm Coordinator if...
 - You have a phone service or name change, or if situations change, such as a disabled person now residing at the residence, etc.

6. Your central monitoring station should not request a police dispatch for power outages, low battery signals or loss of telephone connections.
7. Replace old police department direct-connect monitoring equipment with newer, high security monitoring technology. **Dirty or wet phone lines, telephone repairs and service interruptions do not require police response!**
8. Upgrade old alarm systems to current equipment conforming to Security Industry Association (SIA) false alarm prevention standards, further reducing false alarms.

CHECK LIST

- ✓ Are you and others who use the system fully educated on its proper operation?
- ✓ Does everyone with a key to your home know how to operate your security system?
- ✓ Do you take care to eliminate possible causes of false alarms?
- ✓ Have you rehearsed alarm cancellation procedures with all who use your system to cancel accidental alarm activations?
- ✓ Do you communicate with your security company regularly, advising of schedule changes, problem areas or maintenance needs?
- ✓ Do you notify your local Alarm Coordinator when phone numbers or situations change?
- ✓ Do you have your security system instruction book and alarm company names and telephone numbers readily available in order to call and cancel accidental alarm activations?

CITY OF EL MONTE
POLICE DEPARTMENT
11333 VALLEY BLVD
EL MONTE, CA 91731

ALARM COORDINATOR
Shannon Nurre
(626) 580-2159
snurre@elmontepd.org

CITY OF EL MONTE



False Alarm Ordinance Information



- False Alarms Cost System Users \$\$\$
- False Alarms Waste Valuable Police Resources
- "Crying Wolf" Can Delay Response When You Really Need It

WHAT IS THE FALSE ALARM ORDINANCE?

The False Alarm Ordinance was passed by the City Council in April 2007. Enforcement began in August 2007.

The False Alarm Ordinance was passed to reduce the number of false alarms Police Officers respond to.

Two officers need to respond to each alarm even if it turns out to be a false alarm. They spend about 15 minutes at each false alarm call.

In 2006 Police Officers responded to 4200 alarm calls. Only 2% of those alarms resulted in an actual crime or an attempted crime. That means approximately 4000 of those alarms were false alarms.

The time spent by officers at false alarms means less time for them to spend with citizens or businesses that have an actual need to meet with officers.

WHAT IS A FALSE ALARM?

“A false alarm is notification of an alarm to the police department when the responding authority finds no evidence of criminal offense or attempted criminal offense.”

WHAT THE FALSE ALARM ORDINANCE REQUIRES RESIDENT'S TO DO.

If you have a burglary or robbery alarm installed or are planning on getting one installed then you must fill out an Alarm Permit Application with the City of El Monte.

There is an application fee of \$25.00 that must be turned in as well.

The Alarm Permit expires December 31st of every year and must be renewed.

The renewal fee is \$25.00.

The alarm system must be inspected before renewal by a licensed technician usually supplied by the alarm company which installed the alarm.

ARE THERE FEE EXEMPTIONS IN THE ALARM ORDINANCE?

Yes! There are fee exemptions allowed in the Alarm Ordinance.

- Low income seniors who are 62 years or older and meet a minimum income requirement based on the number of people living in the household.
- Disabled persons.
- Honorably discharged disabled veterans.

ARE THERE FINES FOR FALSE ALARMS?

Yes, there are. Each applicant can have three false alarms in a year before being fined for a false alarm.

1 st False alarm:	No Penalty
2 nd False alarm:.....	No Penalty
3 rd False alarm:	No Penalty
4 th False alarm/1 st Violation.....	\$100.00
5 th False alarm/2 nd Violation.....	\$125.00
6 th False alarm/3 rd Violation	\$150.00
7 th False alarm/4 th Violation	\$200.00
Every False Alarm/Violation thereafter:.....	\$200.00

COMMON CAUSES OF FALSE ALARMS

1. Inadequate training of people allowed access to your security system (children, neighbors, cleaning personnel, real estate agents, guests, relatives, babysitters, service and delivery personnel, etc.).
2. Weak system batteries.
3. Open, unlocked or loose fitting doors and windows.
4. Drafts from heaters and air conditioning systems that move plants, curtains, balloons, etc.
5. Wandering pets.

FALSE ALARMS ...

- Take police and fire fighters away from real emergencies. This embarrassing situation endangers responding authorities and the whole community by needlessly diverting public safety resources.
- Desensitizes communities to actual incidents of crime and can lead to neighbors ignoring your alarm when it goes off.
- Make your security system less reliable and credible.
- May make you reluctant to arm your system, exposing your home and property to undetected theft or fire.
- Cost citizens time, personal security and money, as many jurisdictions assess costly fines for excessive false alarms.

INSTALLING & ACTIVATING AN ALARM SYSTEM

- Check with your local jurisdiction to see if you are required to register your alarm system.
- When purchasing an alarm system you must remember that you are a vital part of the alarm function. You must completely understand how the system works, what it does and does not do, and what you must do to keep it in proper operating condition.
- Ensure all users of your system are provided adequate and thorough instruction on using and testing the system. Ask your alarm company to provide you with written instructions as well as a physical demonstration.
- Ensure outside audible alarms are set to sound for no more than 15 minutes before resetting.