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2 ***Preventing False Alarms***

or

How to Prevent False Police & Fire Dispatches

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4 ***False Alarm Prevention***

- According to the Security Industry Association Coalition *Model Alarm Ordinance* a false alarm dispatch is:

an alarm dispatch request to the police department when the responding officer finds no evidence of a criminal offense or attempted criminal offense after having completed a timely investigation of the alarm site.

5 **Regulations**

- City, County, State
- Local Ordinances

6 ***State Rules & Regulations***

- There are no rules established for central station operations by the state.
- The rules for operation are established by Underwriters Laboratories
- Personnel in a Central station are governed by Florida Statutes (F.S. 489)
- You are in this class to comply with state regulations for required training

7 ***Local rules***

(Local government ordinances)

- Best example is Boca Raton, and Delray Beach, FL:
 - In Boca and Delray, unless the alarm company is UL listed, and the central station is approved by the city:
you may not install or monitor alarms within city limits

8 **Industry Standards**

- CPO1
- Enhanced Call Verification

- 9 ***National Rules
(NFPA Codes)***
- Monitoring of Fire Alarms are governed by NFPA codes.
 - The National Fire Alarm Code, NFPA 72, 1996 edition requires a certain response to various types of signals
- 10 **Industry Standards, Accepted Practices, & Approved Procedures**
- NFPA UL FS489 FS633
 - SIAC Model Alarm Ordinances
 - Local Building Codes
 - Local Police and Fire Alarm Regulations
- 11 ***Emergency Forces Dispatching Requirements & Techniques***
- Florida law now requires every Burglar Alarm signal to be verified
 - You may not delay a dispatch to a commercial fire alarm signal
 - You may verify a residential fire alarm signal
 - You must comply with other rules as they are established
- 12 **Rules for dispatching
Police & Fire Officials**
- ✓ Police and Fire officials risk their lives everyday to provide emergency services to the residents of their communities
- 13 ***Operating Procedures***
- **Your operating procedures must compliment the local rules and regulations**
 - **Customers may not override state law, or local ordinances**
- 14 **Industry Programs**
- Local Installation Service Company
 - Mass Marketing
 - Authorized Dealer Program
 - Purchase and Lease
 - Third Party Monitoring

15 Internet Sales

- DO IT YOURSELF-ers
- End User Monitoring

16 **Company policy**

- Every company establishes their own rules and regulations for handling emergencies
- UL merely provides guidelines for the basic operations of a central station
- Central Station Manager should develop and implement these policies

17 **Requirements of the customer**

- Response to certain signals is mandated by the customer
- State law sometimes supercedes the requirements of the customer
 - Example-commercial fire alarm-we are required to notify the authorities even if the customer says they don't want us to dispatch (*NFPA 72, 1996 Edition*)

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- **The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) estimates that each alarm system generate 2 alarms per year.**
- **98% of these dispatches are determined to be false alarms**
- **A survey by the CSAA indicated that monitored systems filter out 90% of false activation's**

19 Communications

- Telephone Lines
- Cellular
- Radio Relay
- Line Monitor
- Line Protection

20 ***The Duties of a Central Station***

- Provide the safety and security their customers expect
- To act responsibly
- To help avoid unnecessary alarm dispatches
- Help reduce false alarms

21 **Training**

- Most Central Stations train their new employees for at least 40 hours before allowing them to handle alarm signals.
- Underwriters Laboratories requires record keeping of all on going training
- Florida now requires training for anyone selling, installing or servicing alarm systems

22 **Why alarm companies are concerned with false alarms**

- Additional Cost
- Appearance of degraded reliability
- Safety
- Customer Good Will
- Attrition

23 **Why alarm users should be concerned with false alarms**

- Increased cost due to false alarm fines
- Possibility of being placed on:
 - "No Response"**
- Police may lose faith in the quality of alarm system placing themselves, and the users in danger

24 **Effects of False Alarms**

- Increased central station activity
- Increased follow up costs for
 - service department
 - sales department
 - customer service department
 - productive time diverted to non income producing projects

25 **Non Response**

- Some authorities have enacted ordinances that stop responses after a certain number of false alarms
- Several area have eliminated response to alarm signals entirely

26 **Methods of Reducing False Dispatches**

- *Verify burglar alarms before dispatching*
- *Proper data entry of information prior to system "going on line"*
- *Proper education on the use of system to all who will use the system at the time of installation*
- *Offer additional training if needed*
- *Make repairs at no charge*

27 **Alarms Reduce Crime!!**

- Residences with alarm systems were 6 times less likely to be burglarized than homes without security systems¹
- Monitored systems reduce police dispatches²

28 **Interaction with Police and Fire Officials**

- Attitudes of the Police
 - Industry is getting rich on their service
 - Audible alarms do not decrease crime, silent alarms do.
 - Alarm systems increase police workload
 - Alarm industry is not trying to solve the crime
 - Failure rate of alarms is 98%

29 **Example of Alarm Companies and Police Working Together**

- **Palm Beach County, Florida**
 - An Alarm ordinance has been in effect since 1988.
 - In 1993 the ordinance was revised
 - In 1999 the ordinance was revised again
 - In all instances the Alarm Community played an important part in the development of the ordinance.
 - As alarm installations increased-the number of police & fire dispatches decreased.....>

30 **Recognition**

- In 1995 SIAC recognized the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office for having the lowest false alarm rate in the country.
- Since that time alarm companies working in conjunction with PBSO have reduced false dispatches by more than 30%.

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33 **So now let's look at the specifics of the local alarm ordinance and what requirements must be followed in your town:**

34 **Reasons for False Dispatches**

- 80-95% of all false alarms are caused by the system user.
- 5% due to equipment malfunction
- And the remaining 5% from:
 - Weather
 - System Maintenance
 - And undetermined causes

35 **So now -- how can you help?**

- By following some very simple procedures, you can reduce false alarms responses to your home and business:

36 **Power**

- Batteries
- Transformers
- Power Supplies
- AC Outlets

37 **Proper Emergency Information**

- Make Sure your central station has:
 - An up to date password list (and make sure everyone who will use the alarm knows their password)
 - Proper phone numbers to enable a verification call to your home or business
 - List of emergency people to notify should the alarm activate

38 **Around your home/business**

- Keep pets out of areas secured by motion detection devices
- Increase your entry/exit delay times (your alarm company can provide assistance with this feature)
- If new employees are hired, train them on the use of the alarm system—don't assume they know how it works.

39 **Your Security or Fire System**

- Update antiquated equipment
- Get additional training if needed from the security company
- Keep your system properly maintained (this is different from updating a system)
 - Replace batteries
 - Have the system checked at least once per year by a licensed alarm contractor

40 **Annunciators**

- Exterior Sirens
- Interior Sirens
- Bells
- Strobe Lights

41 **Installation – Service -- Maintainance**

Only permit a licensed alarm contractor to perform any alarm installations, service or maintenance.

An unlicensed contractor may save you a few dollars now, but it will cost you in the long term

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