

# Know what to do if you set off your alarm by accident

- ▶ First, do not panic. Enter your disarm code (carefully!) to reset your system.
- ▶ Wait for your alarm company or central monitoring station to call, give your password or ID card number.

▶ **DO NOT** leave your home or business until you have talked with your monitoring station. **Do not call 911 to cancel an alarm activation. You must call your monitoring station.**



You can arrange to have your alarm monitoring station call you or another designated person first before the Police Department is called whenever your alarm is activated. If you are aware of a problem with the system, you can cancel law enforcement dispatch.

▶ Review with your alarm/monitoring company the procedures you expect them to follow when an alarm activates. Do you want them to attempt to call more than one person on your contact list before requesting law enforcement dispatch? Do you only want the police notified if exterior and interior zones are both activated?

▶ Put your instructions in writing!

# The Alarm Ordinance

Each security/alarm system **MUST** be registered with the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, and must be renewed every two years.

*The Town of Leesburg has adopted the County's ordinance, which is administered by the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office.*

## False Alarm Fees:

Two (2) "free" false alarms per calendar year

Commercial Fines	
1 <sup>st</sup>	No charge
2 <sup>nd</sup>	No charge
3 <sup>rd</sup>	\$100
4 <sup>th</sup>	\$200
5 <sup>th</sup>	\$300
6 <sup>th</sup>	\$400
7 <sup>th</sup>	\$500
8 <sup>th</sup>	\$600
9 <sup>th</sup>	\$700
10 <sup>th</sup>	\$800
11 <sup>th</sup>	\$900
12 <sup>th</sup>	\$1,000
13 <sup>th</sup>	\$1,250
14 <sup>th</sup>	\$1,500
15 <sup>th</sup>	\$1,750
16 <sup>th</sup>	\$2,000
17 <sup>th</sup>	\$2,500
18 <sup>th</sup>	\$3,000
19 <sup>th</sup>	\$3,500
20 <sup>th</sup>	\$4,000 each

Leesburg Police Department  
False Alarm Reduction Program  
65 Plaza Street, NE  
Leesburg, VA 20176

# Commercial False Alarm Prevention



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**LEESBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
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# What is a false alarm?

A false alarm is the activation of a security system to which the Emergency Communication Center (911) is notified, yet is not the result of criminal activity occurring or has occurred.

False alarms are steadily on the rise. Each year false alarms cost **all** of us thousands of dollars as deputies are diverted from proactive prevention efforts. You as the system user also experience the inconvenience of false alarms and the assessment of fines. False alarms must concern each of us. **Our goal is to reduce the growing number of false alarms, which have a significant impact on resources, affecting the community as a whole.**

## False Alarm Reduction Unit

To discourage repeat false alarms, Loudoun County passed an ordinance requiring law enforcement to track false alarms and charge a fee to the alarm user for repeat false alarms. The Program calls for both a registration for security systems and a tiered fine system for residents and companies with excessive false alarms.

The False Alarm Reduction Unit of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office was created to administer the County's False Alarm Reduction Ordinance. The program's main function is to reduce the number of false alarms that police respond to each year.

The False Alarm Reduction Unit registers alarm companies and alarm users, sends notification of false alarms, and bills for excessive false alarms in accordance with the Ordinance.

# Major causes of false alarms

## Human Errors



- Use of incorrect keypad codes.
  - Failure to train other authorized users.
- Failure to secure doors and windows before turning on alarm.
  - Failure to notify monitoring facility of unscheduled openings or closings.
  - Failure to update authorized personnel list with monitoring facility.

## Equipment Problems

- Improper application or installation of interior motion detectors.
- Improper application or installation of outdoor beams.
- Improper charging or checking of batteries.
- Faulty equipment (i.e., panels, detectors, keypads, etc.).



**Be part of the solution – not part of the problem!**

# Tips For Businesses

- 1) Be sure all employees are thoroughly trained before attempting to use the alarm system.
- 2) Watch out for holiday-related false alarms (temporary employees, decorations, etc.)
- 3) Look for items that can move within the “view” of your motion detectors.
- 4) Confirm that special consideration has been given to the installation of motion detectors in high bay areas with overhead doors, large exhaust fans or ceiling vents which allow entry of birds.
- 5) **Ensure all doors and windows are secure and locked before arming your system.**
- 6) Ensure that floor mounted contacts are not being used on overhead/rollup doors. Track-mounted contact on BOTH sides of the door will reduce false alarms due to wind or shaking of the door.
- 7) Don't change pass codes without advising your central monitoring station and the appropriate authorized users.
- 8) Train new users thoroughly, notifying your monitoring station of new authorized users.
- 9) Your central monitoring station should not request a law enforcement dispatch for power outages, low battery signals or loss of telephone connections.
- 10) If you believe your alarm system is not working properly, immediately contact your alarm provider.
- 11) Inspect the alarm system – Follow your alarm company's instructions on testing the system regularly – **DO NOT test it by intentionally setting it off.** Have your alarm company replace batteries as needed; wireless systems generally require this more often. Any broken contacts should be replaced immediately. Pests and rodents can chew through system wires
- 12) Upgrade old alarm systems to current equipment conforming to Security Industry Association false alarm prevention standards, further reducing false alarms.