

What is a False Alarm?

Ordinance #7181 states a False Alarm means the activation of a burglary or robbery alarm, whereby the police are summoned to a location and neither of these crimes is occurring nor is there any evidence of these crimes having occurred, or having been attempted. Alarms due to vandalism, destruction of property, telephone faults, acts of God (to include, but not limited to, thunderstorms as defined by the National Weather Service), or natural or manmade catastrophe as determined by the Chief of Police, shall not be considered "false" under this ordinance.

Appealing False Alarm Service Fees

If an alarm subscriber believes they have been charged a false alarm service fee for a VALID ALARM, they may submit a written appeal to the City of Alton – ARFAM. Only written appeals will be considered. Include your name, alarm registration number, the incident number and the reason for the appeal. Appeals are adjudicated by City of Alton personnel and alarm owners are notified by mail of the appeal resolution with any refund of paid false alarm service fees.

Additional Resources for Alarm Owners

Alarm Association of Greater St. Louis
www.alarmsstl.org

Illinois Electronic Security Association
www.iesa.net

National Electronic Security Association
www.alarm.org

CITY OF ALTON - ARFAM does not endorse any particular alarm company.

False Alarm Service Fee Schedule

False Alarm Service Fees will be assessed on the quantity of false alarms within a twelve month period from the registration date.

False Alarm	Service Fee	Notification and Action
1	\$0.00	Alarm owner mailed notice of false alarm.
2	\$25.00	Alarm owner mailed notice of false alarm and service fee.
3	\$50.00	Alarm owner mailed notice of false alarm and service fee.
4	\$50.00	Alarm owner mailed notice of false alarm and service fee. Alarm registration suspended from alarm company dispatch for 30 days.
5	\$100.00	Alarm owner mailed notice of false alarm and service fee.
6	\$100.00	Alarm owner mailed notice of false alarm and service fee.
7	\$100.00	Alarm owner mailed notice of false alarm and service fee.
8+	\$100.00	Alarm owner mailed notice of false alarm and service fee. Alarm registration suspended from alarm company dispatch for 365 days.

This brochure is a brief summary of the False Alarm Ordinance. Additional information and the full ordinance is available at City Hall or online at <http://alton-il.com>. Click on the Alarm Registration & Payment link.

CITY OF ALTON—ARFAM
PO BOX 66914
SAINT LOUIS, MO 63166-6914
TEL: 877-686-4396
IVR: 866-331-0148

City of Alton



Police Department

Alarm Registration & False Alarm Management Ordinance #7181

Information you need if you have
a Security Alarm System in your
home or business!

Background

Prior to 2010, the Alton Police Department had been responding to more than 1,000 false alarms per year. In February 2010, the City of Alton implemented a new Alarm Registration & False Alarm Management Ordinance. The ordinance governs the licensing of alarm sales, installation and monitoring companies; the registration of monitored and non-monitored security alarm systems for residential and commercial locations; and establishes an annual registration fee and false alarm service fee structure.

Alarm Registration

Residential and commercial alarm owners are assessed an annual, non-refundable registration fee. Alarm companies are required to collect and remit the fee to the City of Alton-ARFAM. The fee is \$25.00 for residential, \$50.00 for commercial alarm owners. Non-monitored alarm owners remit directly to the City of Alton-ARFAM.

Frequent Causes of False Alarms

1. Use of incorrect key pad codes.
2. Failure to train other authorized users.
3. Failure to secure doors and windows before turning on alarm.
4. Failure to notify monitoring station of unscheduled openings or closings.
5. Failure to update authorized personnel list with the monitoring station.
6. Failure to confine pets in areas outside of the range of motion sensors.
7. Alarm company fails to cancel dispatch request before officer arrives at premise.

Alarm Owner's Rights

1. Work with an alarm business or subcontractor licensed by the City of Alton;
2. Be shown an ID from any alarm agent (salesperson or installer) that includes a full face photo of the agent, name, height, weight, date of birth, name of employing alarm business, business license number of such alarm business, agent's capacity with the business, and signature of the agent;
3. Be provided with a written estimate of cost and scope of work to be performed before any work is begun for either a new alarm system installation or alteration of an existing system;
4. Receive written instructions and training by the alarm agent in the operation of the alarm system and the prevention of false alarms;
5. Receive a phone number of the central station that monitors the alarm System; and,
6. Receive a copy of the ordinance and this brochure detailing the rights and responsibilities of alarm owners.

Tips to Prevent False Alarms

1. Secure doors and windows before turning on the system.
2. Assure family members and other trusted individuals are familiar with your alarm system operation.
3. Be aware of changes in the environment (e.g. new animals, design changes, seasonal decorations, plants, etc).
4. Notify monitoring station of all changes such as house guests, name changes, new or terminated employees.
5. Equipment should be routinely inspected and maintained by qualified individuals.

Alarm Owner's Responsibilities

1. Only work with alarm businesses and/or subcontractors properly licensed by the City of Alton;
2. Maintain the premises in which the alarm system is installed in a manner that insures proper operation of the system;
3. Maintain the alarm system in a manner that will prevent or minimize false alarms;
4. Sign a form provided by the alarm business at the time of installation certifying that owner (a) understands the requirement to register an alarm systems, (b) has received instructions on the proper operation of the system, (c) has received a copy of the ordinance, and (d) has received a brochure on the rights and responsibilities of an alarm owner;
5. Refrain from manually activating an alarm for any reason other than upon the occurrence of an event that the alarm system was installed to report;
6. Instruct all persons authorized to use the alarm system in the proper use of the system and the prevention of false alarms;
7. Promptly pay all alarm fees billed to owner associated with false alarms;
8. Pay the alarm system annual registration fee in the event such fee is not paid by owner's alarm business/central monitoring station.
9. Provide contact information to your alarm monitoring company for at least two individuals who can respond to and secure the premises within 30 minutes.