



City of Alton, Illinois

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

* * * * ***PUBLIC NOTICE*** * * * *

**ALTON, ILLINOIS ESTABLISHES
ALARM REGISTRATION AND FALSE ALARM MANAGEMENT
ORDINANCE**

(March 1, 2010) - - City of Alton, Illinois residents and business owner who own a burglar alarm system now have until June 1, 2010 to register their system and be in compliance with the city's new false alarm ordinance. Police response to alarm company dispatch requests will be denied for those systems not registered by June 1, 2010. The new ordinance, which provides for annual alarm registration fees and false alarm fines, is designed to reduce false alarms, improve police response times and recover costs associated with maintaining a response mechanism for alarm companies. Alarm companies will be required to identify the alarm site location and provide an active alarm system permit number when requesting police dispatch to an alarm sounding.

The Alton Police department has been responding to a high percentage of false alarms as more alarm systems are installed. A reduction in the number of false alarms will have the effect of adding police officers to the force.

By having all burglar alarm systems registered, city officials will be able to track false alarms. False burglar alarm dispatch requests will result in an escalating false alarm fine charged to the subscriber. The fine schedule applies to false alarm incident within a 12 month period. In addition to the fines, the alarm companies will be subject to suspension of police response for alarms which generate an excessive number of false alarms.

The Alarm Registration and False Alarm Management Ordinance, which Mayor Tom Hoechst signed into law February 25, 2010, requires that annual registration fees be charged for residential and commercial alarm systems. These fees will allow police to continue responding directly to alarm company dispatch requests. In addition, they will allow the Police Department to establish a tracking system to hold alarm owners accountable for false alarms.

Under the Ordinance, alarm companies must remit \$25 annually for each residential alarm systems and \$50 annually for each commercial alarm system. Alarm companies may collect the fee from the alarm owners and remit back to the city.



City of Alton, Illinois

The Ordinance includes fines for two or more false alarms within a 12-month period. The alarm owner receives a warning notice but no fine for the first false alarm.

False Alarm Fine and Suspension Schedule

False Alarm Incident	False Alarm Fine	False Alarm Notification and Registration Status
1	\$0.00	Alarm owner notified of the false alarm incident via postal mail.
2	\$25.00	Alarm owner notified of the false alarm incident via postal mail including the fine.
3	\$50.00	Alarm owner notified of the false alarm incident via postal mail including the fine.
4	\$50.00	Alarm owner notified of the false alarm incident via postal mail including the fine. Registration suspended 30 days. Alarm Company (or Alarm Owner if no Alarm Company) must recertify that Alarm Owner has been trained in the proper use of the Alarm System before Alarm Owner will re-qualify for police response.
5	\$100.00	Alarm owner notified of the false alarm incident via postal mail including the fine.
6	\$100.00	Alarm owner notified of the false alarm incident via postal mail including the fine.
7	\$100.00	Alarm owner notified of the false alarm incident via postal mail including the fine.
8	\$100.00	Alarm owner notified of the false alarm incident via postal mail including the fine. Registration suspended 365 days. Alarm Company (or Alarm Owner if no Alarm Company) must recertify that Alarm Owner has been trained in the proper use of the Alarm System before Alarm Owner will re-qualify for police response.

No false alarms will be counted when the alarms are activated due to criminal activity, bad weather, power outages, police radio interference or manufacturer’s defect of alarm equipment. Alarm companies are required to institute the industry practice of two call verification to reduce false dispatch requests.

Similar ordinances have been passed or are being considered in many other cities including Baltimore, Philadelphia, Denver and Milwaukee. The City of St. Louis implemented an identical ordinance in July 2005 and has experienced a dramatic reduction of false alarms.

The Ordinance, false alarm fee and fine schedules, and other forms and documents are available on the city’s web site at www.alton-il.com. Alarm subscribers should contact their alarm companies for additional information.