

WHAT IS A FALSE ALARM?

A false alarm is an alarm call for service in which police determine the alarm was caused by anything other than a criminal offence, medical or fire emergency. The most common causes of false alarms include user error, faulty equipment and household pets.

HOW CAN I PREVENT FALSE ALARMS?

- Ensure everyone using the alarm system is aware of how it operates.
- Ensure that service workers know you have an alarm system.
- Secure all doors and windows before turning on your alarm system.
- Be aware of changes in environment (i.e. seasonal decorations, plants, design changes, pets, etc.).
- Replace batteries in panic buttons and wireless sensors at least once a year.
- Replace the battery in the control panel every three to five years.
- Have your alarm system routinely inspected and maintained by qualified service people.
- Provide your alarm company with a complete and current list of key holders and up-to-date contacts.
- Notify your alarm company if you have any new pets.
- Check all door and window contacts and ensure they are tight and secure.
- Dust around motion detectors on a regular basis, making sure there are no bugs or spiders inside motion detectors.
- Test your alarm system connection with the central station once a month.
- Contact your alarm company prior to testing your system.

HOW CAN I KEEP MY HOME SAFE?

- **Do not** leave a spare key hidden for an intruder to find. Keep your key with another resident of the home, or in a safe spot inside.
- **Do not** open the door for strangers. Use a window or peephole to verify that the person at your door is who they say they are.
- **Do not** allow anyone into your home to use the telephone. If necessary, make the call for them while they wait outside.
- **Do not** announce to a person at the door or on the telephone that you are alone.
- **Do not** leave notes on your door for delivery people advising you are not home. Call the delivery company ahead, or arrange for delivery during a time when you will be present.
- **Do not** enter your home if it has been broken into. Go to a neighbour's house or drive to a safe place and call police immediately using 9-1-1.
- **Do** install high-quality deadbolts, locks and a wide-angle peephole in your doors.
- **Do** ask for identification from service workers and confirm their identification with the service company over the telephone.
- **Do** keep bushes and landscaping trimmed to allow for natural surveillance of your home from neighbours, pedestrians and drivers of passing vehicles.

Alarm Program Administration

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ALARM PROGRAM

HELP US REDUCE FALSE ALARMS

York Regional Police officers respond to more than 13,000 alarm calls each year. Unfortunately, 99 per cent of those calls are false alarms. In order to provide residents of York Region with efficient, effective service and reduce the burden on taxpayers, York Regional Police has revised the Alarm Program using a cost-recovery model. This reduces the demands and costs associated with responding to false alarms, prompts security providers to conduct investigations before police attend, and encourages homeowners to take measures to avoid false alarms altogether.

NEW ALARM PROGRAM

As of June 1, 2015, residents and business owners will no longer be charged to register alarms at their premise, or pay reinstatement fees. Alarm subscribers are still required to provide registration information to their alarm company, however, there is no longer a fee for doing so. Alarm subscribers are no longer subject to a suspension, allowing York Regional Police to provide superior quality service to residents of the region.

Under the new program, monitoring companies will be charged a fee for a dispatched alarm call that is deemed as false or cancelled prior to arrival. Monitoring companies will be required to verify an alarm call prior to requesting police dispatch. If a premise is subject to a false or cancelled alarm, the alarm subscriber will be billed accordingly by the monitoring company.

FEES

False Alarm Fee

\$190.00 plus HST will be charged for every dispatched alarm call that is deemed false by the attending officer.

Cancelled Alarm Fee

\$120.00 plus HST will be charged for every dispatched alarm that is cancelled prior to an officer's arrival at the premise.

WHY SHOULD I REGISTER MY ALARM?

The goal of the York Regional Police Alarm Program is to register all alarmed premises in York Region. There is no registration fee. Registering alarms will assist our service in responding to calls in a timely and efficient manner.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

Registrations are done through your alarm service provider. It is the responsibility of the alarm provider to communicate all amendments made to the bylaw governing the York Regional Police Alarm Program to their alarm subscribers. Any fees required will be collected by your alarm service provider and forwarded to York Regional Police.

APPEALS

Appeals must be submitted in writing by the alarm company or monitoring company on behalf of customers. Only one appeal per subscriber will be accepted in a 365 day period.

AUTOMATED DIALING DEVICES

York Regional Police does not respond to calls for police response from automated dialing devices.



ALARM SYSTEM CHECKLIST

It is important for consumers to do their homework before purchasing an alarm system.

- Have you talked to more than two different alarm companies?
- Will they provide references?
- Are the installation company and the monitoring company ULC listed?
- Do you know how and where the alarm system is monitored?
- Have criminal background checks been completed on the installers and sales personnel?
- Is there an operating manual offered with the alarm system?
- Is there a five to ten day testing period available during which you can practice using the system without police being dispatched? Statistics show that there is a higher rate of false alarms during the first few days of installation.
- What are the verification options and the dispatch cancellation procedures?
- Will the alarm system be able to identify which area the signal is coming from? This allows service to target the problem area to be addressed.
- Does the alarm system have an audible device? This is not only a deterrent but, also notifies you of an alarm situation.
- Is the system equipped with dual action panic buttons (not just one) to minimize an accidental trip?
- Have they advised you of the York Regional Police Alarm Response Policy?