

False Alarm Prevention

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**What You Need To Know
If You Have
An Alarm System
In Your Home Or Business**

The Alarm Ordinance

An amendment to False Alarm Ordinance #4760-1111 was made by the Prescott City Council on August 13, 2013. This Ordinance is also known as Title V, Chapter 6, Alarm Systems, of the City Code.

What is a False Alarm?

Any activation of an alarm eliciting response by Police personnel when a situation requiring a response does not in fact exist. This would include mechanical failure or malfunction, improper installation or maintenance, user error, intentional activation when no criminal or emergency condition exists, or any other cause not related to an actual or attempted criminal act. **This also includes calls that are later cancelled.**

What is Not Considered a False Alarm?

Any alarm caused by a severe act of nature, activation for routine testing/ installation **if** advance notice has been given to Police Department, testing/repair/ malfunction of utility lines or equipment not under control of the alarm user, malicious acts of persons not under the direction or control of alarm user, proprietary alarms that do not result in a call to police, and independent stand-alone alarm systems installed or placed by or at the direction of the Prescott Police Department for law enforcement purposes.

Did you know?

- Nationally, between 94% - 98% of alarms are false.
- In 2009, Prescott Police responded to 2,923 alarm calls, 2,913 of which were false alarms.
- In 2009, false alarms accounted for over 99% of all Prescott Police alarm calls and over 40% of all Priority One calls.
- False alarms delay response to calls that may be REAL emergencies and false alarms cost the City of Prescott in excess of \$75,000 each year.
- Not only do false alarms delay response to real emergencies, they are very disruptive to the neighborhoods surrounding the alarm.
- Human error is the largest single cause of false alarms.

What to do if your alarm goes off inadvertently.

- Don't panic
- Don't call 911, your alarm company will contact Police if it is a true emergency
- Disarm your alarm system
- Wait a few minutes for your alarm company to either call you or you can call your alarm company directly
- Give them your pass code
- Explain the circumstances of the false alarm
- Confirm that they haven't called police
- Follow the alarm company's directions
- Verify that your alarm company has utilized Enhanced Verified Response

False Alarm Assessments

Is Alarm Registration Required?

Yes. If you fail to register your alarm after your first false alarm, as required by Section 5-6-5.A a \$30.00 Fine will be assessed.

False Alarm Assessment Fees

The following assessments will be levied against the alarm user, or responsible party, for each response by the Prescott Police Department to a false alarm within a twelve month period, which begins on the date of the first false alarm. These assessments are in addition to any other assessment or penalties which may be levied.

First Response	No Charge
Second Response	No Charge
Third Response	\$100
Fourth Response	\$200
Fifth Response	\$300
Sixth Response	\$400
Seventh and Subsequent Responses	Increase of \$100 per false alarm

Is There An Appeal Process?

Yes. If an alarm owner believes that they have been charged unjustly, based on the cause or exemption of a false alarm, they can obtain an appeals petition from the City website or the Alarm Coordinator and submit the completed form to the Alarm Coordinator for reconsideration. All appeals will be reviewed by the Chief of Police or his designee. **The appeal must be submitted within twenty (20) days of the assessment notice mailing.** You can find the appeal on the City of Prescott website.

How To Avoid A False Alarm

- Make sure that your alarm company has a list of current, reachable contact numbers and is notified of all changes (house guests, name changes, new renters, employee changes, etc.)
- Ask your alarm monitoring company to call you **prior** to calling Police (Enhanced Verified Response).
- Make sure all users of your alarm system are familiar with the alarm system operations.
- Secure and check doors and windows before turning on the system.
- Be aware of changes in environment (new animals, design changes, decorations, plants). Don't leave pets unsecured w/ motion detectors.
- Equipment should be routinely inspected / maintained by qualified personnel (check all contacts and routinely dust motion detectors).

City of Prescott

Prescott Police Department
Alarm Coordinator
222 S. Marina Street
Prescott, AZ 86303
Phone: (928) 777-1906
Fax: (928) 778-3739
Email: false.alarms@prescott-az.gov

For More Information Contact

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Or visit our website:
www.prescott-az.gov/services/police

Crime Prevention Services

Residential & Business Security Survey

To schedule a FREE security survey for your home or business, contact the Prescott Police Department's Crime Prevention Team.

Prescott Police Department
Crime Prevention Specialist
222 S. Marina Street
Prescott, AZ 86303
Phone: (928) 777-1988
Fax: (928) 778-3739

