

Frequently Asked Questions:

The police did not respond—why was I fined for a false alarm?

The charge is not based on a police response. When your alarm company calls the Emergency Communication Center (911), you are fined for a false alarm unless it is cancelled within four (4) minutes.

My alarm system malfunctioned—why was I fined for a false alarm?

A false alarm caused by a malfunctioning alarm system is still a false alarm and you will be fined. You are responsible for ensuring the alarm system is kept in proper working order.

The police did respond to my alarm system and found an open door, but nothing was missing from inside—why was I fined for a false alarm?

If officers find an open door to a residence or business, with no property missing and no new damage to the exterior of the building or the door, this is a false alarm and you will be fined. If there is damage that appears to be old, and was not caused at the time your alarm system activated, you will be fined for a false alarm. You are responsible for securing the residence or business when you leave. If officers respond and, after investigating, believe the door was not properly secured, you will be fined for a false alarm.

False Alarm Facts:

- There are approximately 40,000 registered alarm owners in the City of Wichita, and the number grows each day.
- Over 15,000 burglary alarm activations occur each year in Wichita, and 98% of these are false alarms.
- Each false burglary alarm costs the City of Wichita approximately \$60. This equates to almost \$1 million per year.

Alarm systems were designed to protect lives and property. Properly installed, used, and maintained, an alarm system can be a valuable asset.

You Can Make A Difference!

Wichita Alarm Program
Alarm Administrator
455 N Main - 4th Floor
Wichita, KS 67202
Phone: 316-268-4115 or 877-888-1355
E-mail: wichitaks@publicsafetycorp.com



False Burglary Alarm Information



Wichita Police Department

www.wichita.gov



Main Causes of a False Alarm:

The two leading causes of false burglary alarms are unintentional activations and malfunction of the system. Other causes can include:

- Pets, fans, balloons, or unsecured items
- Noise, vibrations, and dust from construction work
- Poorly or incorrectly designed systems
- Lack of appropriate user training
- Insects
- Lack of maintenance
- Tampering with the burglary alarm system

False burglary alarms are problematic for many reasons. Not only do they place a large burden on Police Department resources, they can also cause people to become complacent. People exposed to frequent false audible burglary alarms may lose faith in the alarm system and ignore the warning in the event of an actual emergency. Excessive false burglary alarms can also cause alarm owners financial hardship due to receiving false alarm fees.

False Burglary Alarm Prevention Tips:

In an effort to reduce the number of false burglary alarms being received by the Wichita Police Department, we ask all homeowners and property managers to follow these guidelines to ensure your system operates as effectively as possible.

- Ensure your burglary alarm system is designed and installed by an alarm company licensed by the City of Wichita.
- Have your system inspected, tested, and maintained by a licensed alarm company at least once every year. Most contacts and sensors need to be cleaned regularly, according to manufacturer's specifications.
- We recommend alarm system owners perform a visual inspection once each month, to ensure no damaged or dirty equipment. If you notice any hanging wires or damaged equipment, call your alarm company immediately to have the system serviced.
- Ensure all sensors and motion detectors are placed in the correct locations.
- Know how to use your keypad and the codes.
- Train all users who will have access to the home or business. This includes: house sitters, cleaning crews, employees, etc.
- Properly secure all doors and windows prior to leaving. **Turning the doorknob and shaking the door or window should not cause the alarm system to activate.**
- Notify your alarm company prior to starting any construction, renovations, or if you have a utility company appointment scheduled.

If you accidentally set off your burglary alarm system:

1. Don't panic.
2. Enter your alarm code to disarm the system.
3. Do not call your alarm company, wait for them to call you.
4. Do not leave until you have been contacted by the alarm company.
5. Do not call 911. The 911 dispatchers will not cancel an alarm unless notified by the alarm company.

False Alarm Disputes:

If you dispute a false alarm, the Wichita Alarm Program does offer an appeal process. Appeals require a \$10.00 appeal fee for each invoice being disputed, which is refundable if the appeal is granted.

We also offer an online Alarm School to allow customers to remove one false alarm fee each permit year.

For more information regarding the appeal process or the Alarm School, please call 316-268-4115 or 877-888-1355.

