

City Updates Alarm Ordinance

San Marino police officers responded to more than 1,600 burglary and robbery alarms in 2009. Approximately 99.4 percent of alarms in the city are false alarms. In an effort to address this situation, the City has updated its Alarm Ordinance. The goal of the new ordinance is to reduce or eliminate the instances of false alarms that prevent or delay the Police Department from responding to other calls for service, and to establish a permit process for alarms to improve the Department's ability to respond to alarm calls.

Examples of false alarm events include malfunctioning alarm systems; owner, visitor or other employee error in disarming the alarm system; doors or windows left open or ajar; and animals locked inside and moving about the premises.

If you set off an alarm by accident, contact the alarm company immediately. If you cannot recite the property's password, the police will be dispatched. It is recommended that you wait for the officers' arrival in front of the property in plain view and be prepared to offer some form of identification to establish your legal presence on the property.

Fines are assessed for dispatches to false alarms depending on the number of false alarms to a single location within a calendar year. There is no fine for the first three false alarms. On the fourth and fifth occurrence, the fine is \$100 per false alarm. On the sixth occurrence or more, the fine is \$500 per false alarm.

All alarm users must have a valid alarm permit. A separate permit is required for each alarm site. The current annual fee is \$25 and is waived for renewal for residential sites at which no false alarms have been reported for the prior year. Failure to obtain a permit constitutes a violation of the Alarm Ordinance unless the alarm system is deactivated.

An alarm permit can be obtained by visiting the San Marino Police Department or on-line at www.cityofsanmarino.org/smpd. Permits obtained in calendar year 2010 will be valid until December 31, 2011. Please contact Records Supervisor Angie Gonzalez at (626) 300-0720 if you have any questions regarding the registration process.