

## **Preventing False Alarms: Are YOU Doing Your Part?**

False alarms. The words are simple, the meaning anything but.

Every year, false alarms take a financial toll on the Police & Fire Departments. The cause of false alarms run the gamut from weather to equipment malfunctions to perhaps the most common, subscriber error.

There are some preventative measures that Home Owners and Business Owners can take to fight false alarms.

### **For The Record**

Incorrect subscriber information can contribute to false alarms. One of the main areas to check is contact information. Make sure the names and phone numbers listed for emergency contacts are still valid. Often, the contacts move or get new phone numbers, and the alarm company is never notified. When an alarm goes off and the central station attempts to notify the contact, they cannot be found. This results in police dispatch who are not happy to find out it was your cat that tripped the alarm.

Check your records to see which ones need updating.

### **Regular Check-Ups**

Testing your security system on a regular basis can also help prevent false alarms. A regular check ensures that system equipment is functioning properly.

- When the alarm user changes their telephone service (DSL, call waiting, ETC.)
- When the alarm user has experienced telephone problems.
- When the alarm user suspects there is an equipment malfunction.
- When you have a power failure or there is lightening damage.
- Remember your signal is being sent over a line and a lot can happen so test it regularly even if there is no need.

### **Additional Tips**

In addition to updating records and regular testing, remember the following.

- Make sure that all doors and windows with sensors are properly secured before activating the alarm system.
- Most false alarms are a result of user error. Make sure that all users are familiar with the system, including what to do if the alarm is set off accidentally. This means that cleaners, relatives, workers, etc., are aware that an alarm system is in place, and all authorized users know their correct code numbers and are instructed in the proper use of the system.