



<b>Blytheville Police Department</b>	Chapter: FIELD OPERATIONS
<b>SOP Number: 8.48</b>	Subject: Alarms Burglary
<i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i>	
Applicable Arkansas Statutes:	
Related Policies: 8.7	Date Implemented: 10-13-14
CALEA Standard: 41.2.1, 81.2.13	Date Reviewed:
CALEA / BPD	Date Revised:
City Ord. 1574 Appendix A	Pages: 4

8.0 FIELD OPERATIONS

8.48 ALARMS BURGLARY (CALEA 41.2.1, 81.2.13)

8.48.1 POLICY

Officers of the Blytheville Police Department will be dispatched/respond to burglar alarms after receiving a call of service of alarm activation or after detecting an audible alarm. Officers will attempt to determine the source of the activation, there are however circumstances that allow for the termination of a response to alarms.

8.48.2 DEFINITIONS:

**Alarm System:** Any device that emits, transmits, or relays a signal intended to summon emergency personnel such as police, fire, EMS, to a specific scene. Alarm systems may be installed on vehicles, structures, property bounds, or medically challenged individuals associated with a specific location.

**Silent Alarm:** An alarm that does not give an audible tone or sound when activated.

**Audible Alarm:** An alarm that gives a loud audible tone or sound when activated.

**Burglary Alarm:** An alarm system that is commonly activated by various sensors such as magnetic, motion, glass breakage etc. generally covering a business, residence or other

structure. A burglary alarm may be specifically be designated a Residential or Commercial type depending on the property being protected. Burglar alarms are generally audible.

**True Alarm:** An alarm that is the result of criminal activity or a true emergency generally accompanied by a department incident report or CAD entry of described activity.

**False Alarm:** An alarm eliciting a response by police or fire when a situation requiring a response does not in fact exist... does not include an alarm caused by violent conditions of nature or other extraordinary circumstances not reasonably subject to control by the Alarm Company or Alarm User". Examples of a false alarm include but not limited to:

- Alarms caused by the owner, operator, agents or service provider or person designated by the owner, operator, agents or service provider to operate the system.
- Alarms caused by the malfunction of equipment for which the owner, operator, agents or service provider are responsible for fixing, replacing, or bypassing if necessary to avoid false alarms.
- Alarms caused by persons allowed to be on the premises including employees of a business but are unable to or have mistakenly operated the system causing false alarm.
- Improper testing of the equipment without prior notification resulting in a response
- Absent of any apparent cause the alarm activation will be considered a False Alarm.

The owner, renter, operator, agent, or other person responsible for the correct and appropriate operation or maintenance of the alarm will be responsible for all false alarms even if they are not the person who directly caused the false alarm itself.

**Other-Explanation:** An alarm activated requiring a response that is neither true nor false and beyond the control of the alarm owner, operator or monitoring service that may trigger an alarm activation such as:

- Alarms caused by lightning, wind or other meteorological event.
- Alarms caused by a disruption of the telephone circuit beyond the control of the alarm owner, operator or its agents, verifiable by the Phone Company.
- Alarms caused by a disruption or failure in electrical power verifiable by the electricity provider beyond the control of the alarm owner, operator or its agents.

**Door-Hanger:** A brightly colored highly visible Placard designed to hang over the knob or handle of a door to notify the owner or occupants that an alarm has sounded resulting in a police response

### 8.48.3 DISPATCH

When receiving calls for service concerning alarm activations, dispatch will attempt to obtain as much of the following information as is available for responding units:

- Complete and specific location of the alarm including Address, Business, or Resident's name and area or cause of alarm activation and contact information if available
- Responding party or "key-holder" ETA
- Classify the Burglary alarm as Residential or Commercial.
- Obtain the cause or area of activation of the alarm such as motion detector, glass breakage, back door etc.
- Direct officers to the address and classification of the alarm along with the area of activation

- Assign a primary and backup unit as is needed for each alarm.
- If applicable or known give responding officers the ETA of the “key-holder”.
- Initiate a call for service into CAD accordingly as a response to an alarm.

#### 8.48.4 VERIFYING CANCELLATION REQUESTS

A burglar alarm with a Domestic Violence Protective Order attached shall require an officer response, even after the alarm company requests a cancellation. Dispatch will relay the protective order and cancellation to the responding officer this however does not permit the officer to cancel the call. An officer shall continue to the scene and verify the cancellation request

#### 8.48.5 PATROL RESPONSE:

Responding officers should assume that each burglar alarm activation is a true event until determined otherwise. Responding units should consider a level 2 response at a reasonable safe speed with emergency equipment activated as needed while en-route. Upon arrival responding units will:

- Advise dispatch that they have arrived on scene.
- Check the perimeter for signs of entry
- If indications of forced entry or criminal activity such as an open door or broken window exists officers will advise dispatch and take up position on opposite corners for better visibility and coverage until sufficient officers are present to begin a building search or clearing.
- On scene officers will advise dispatch if the alarm activation is true, false or other.
- If the on scene officer determines the alarm to be false according to policy and city ordinance they will place a “Door Hanger” on the knob or handle of the front door of the location.

#### 8.48.6 ALARM DISPOSITION/DETERMINATION OF CAUSE:

At the close of the CAD entry dispatchers will obtain from the responding officer the reason or nature of the alarm activation. Alarm CAD entries will be classified and closed in one of three ways

- True Alarm
- False Alarm
- Other Explanation

#### 8.48.7 TERMINATION OF RESPONSE TO ALARMS

Shift Supervisors may authorize temporary suspension or termination to the response of burglar alarms under the following conditions:

- The Alarm User has three (3) or more False Alarms in one (1) twelve-hour period or as instructed by the Chief of Police.
- Due to non-payment of fines or fees assessed under the provisions of this ordinance.

- Unusual circumstances, such as storms or electrical problems.

Supervisors shall ensure the termination of a response to an alarm is made securely and not given over a public radio frequency

#### 8.48.8 FALSE ALARM REDUCTION /DOOR HANGERS

Many times property owners or alarm operators are completely unaware that their alarm has activated or malfunctioned causing a response by our department. In an attempt to reduce the number of false alarms, unless a true event has caused the alarm to activate, responding officers place the door hanger on the front door knob or handle of the location notifying the property owner of the alarm activation. Officers will advise dispatch that the alarm was false and a door hanger has been placed. A false trip by the home or business owner or other person lawfully present is still a false alarm but as they are aware of the alarm and police response no door hanger is needed. On scene officers will relay to dispatch that it was a false trip by persons still on scene.

#### 8.48.9 DETERMINATION OF CAUSE

Responding officers are responsible for classifying the alarm as false or true. Absent of any apparent cause the alarm activation will be considered a False Alarm. A false trip by the home or business owner or other person lawfully present is a false alarm and should be noted false on the CAD entry.

#### 8.48.10 BUSINESS/PROPERTY CONTACTS

Dispatch is responsible for keeping and updating business/alarm contacts in the department RMS system. Dispatch should also utilize this information to help expedite a response.

### Appendix A: City Ordinance 1574

UNOFFICIAL COPY  
CITY ORDINANCE 1574

AN ORDINANCE REGULATING THE USE OF ALARM SYSTEMS AND  
ESTABLISHING PENALTIES FOR FALSE ALARMS AND OTHER PURPOSES.

Enacted and in Force the 20th day of January 2004  
Grace Haynie, City Clerk Barrett E. Harrison, Mayor

- Sec. 1. Purpose
- Sec. 2. Definitions
- Sec. 3. Duties of the Alarm User
- Sec. 4. Duties of the Alarm Company
- Sec. 5. Fines
- Sec. 6. Suspension of Alarm Response
- Sec. 7. Response to alarms
- Sec. 8. Enforcement and Penalties
- Sec. 9. Government Immunity

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of this ordinance is to encourage Alarm Users and Alarm Companies to properly use and maintain the operation effectiveness and proper utilization of Alarm Systems and to reduce or eliminate False Alarms, which may unduly divert law enforcement and fire personnel from responding to criminal or fire, related activity.
- B. This ordinance governs systems intended to summon law enforcement and fire department response, and provides for penalties for violations and establishes a system of administration

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS

In this ordinance:

- A. Alarm Company means the business, by an individual, partnership, corporation or other entity of selling, leasing, maintaining, servicing, repairing, altering, replacing, moving, installing or monitoring an Alarm System in an Alarm Site.
- B. Alarm Dispatch Request means a notification to a law enforcement agency or fire department that an alarm, either manual or automatic has been activated at a particular Alarm Site.
- C. Alarm Site means a single fixed premises or location served by an Alarm System or systems. Each tenancy if served by an alarm system in a multi-tenant building or complex shall be considered a separate Alarm Site.
- D. Alarm System means a device or series of devices, including, but not limited to, systems interconnected with a radio frequency method such as cellular or private radio signals, which emit or transmit a remote or local audible, visual or electronic signal indicating an alarm condition and intended to summon the service of the police department or fire department, including Local Alarm System, Alarm System does not include an alarm installed on a vehicle or Person unless the vehicle or personal alarm is permanently located at a site.
- E. Alarm User means any person, firm, partnership, corporation or other entity who (which) uses or is in control of any Alarm System at its Alarm Site.
- F. Automatic Voice Dialer means any electrical, electronic, mechanical or other device capable of being programmed to send a prerecorded voice message, when activated, over a telephone line, radio or other communication system, to a law enforcement agency or fire department.
- G. Cancellation or Responding Agency Alarm Dispatch Cancellation is the process by which an Alarm Company providing Monitoring verifies with the Alarm User or responsible party that a false dispatch has occurred and that there is not an existing situation tat the alarm site requiring the police or fire departments to respond.
- H. Duress Alarm means a silent alarm system signal generated by the manual activation of a device intended to signal a life threatening situation or a crime in progress requiring a law enforcement or fire department response.
- I. False Alarm means an alarm signal eliciting a response by the police or fire department when a situation requiring a response by the police or fire department does not in fact exist. False alarm does not include an alarm signal caused by violent conditions of nature or other extraordinary circumstances not reasonably subject to control by the Alarm Company or Alarm User. Alarms resulting from the following conditions are not considered false alarms:
  - 1. Criminal activity or unauthorized entry
  - 2. Telephone line malfunction verified in writing to the City by the telephone company
  - 3. Electrical service interruption verified in writing to the city by the local power company

- 4. Communication to the police or fire department before a unit is dispatched to investigate clearly indication that the alarm is resulting from authorized entry, authorized system test, or other non-criminal cause
- 5. An alarm caused on the reasonable but mistaken belief that a burglary, robbery or other criminal offense, fire emergency, or medical emergency is in progress.
- J. Holdup Alarm means a silent alarm signal generated by the manual activation of a device intended to signal a robbery in progress.
- K. Law Enforcement Authority means the Chief of Police
- L. Local Alarm System means any Alarm System that annunciates an alarm only by an internal or external audio device.
- M. Monitoring means the process by which an Alarm Company receives signals from an Alarm System and relays an Alarm Dispatch Request to the Police or fire department for the purpose of summoning police or fire department response to the Alarm Site.
- N. Panic means an audible Alarm System signal generated by the manual activation of a device intended to signal a live threatening or emergency situation requiring police or fire department response.
- O. Person means an individual, corporation, partnership, association, organization or similar entity.
- P. Verify means an attempt, by the Alarm Company, or its representative to contact the Alarm Site by telephonic or other electronic means, whether or not actual contact with a Person is made, before requesting police or fire department dispatch, in an attempt to avoid an unnecessary Alarm Dispatch Request.

### SECTION 3. DUTIES OF THE ALARM USER

- A. An Alarm User Shall:
  - 1. Maintain the premises and the Alarm System in a manner that will minimize or eliminate False Alarms, and
  - 2. Make every reasonable effort to respond or cause a representative to respond to the Alarm System's location within 20 minutes when notified by the police or fire department to deactivate a malfunction Alarm System, to provide access to the premises, or to provide alternative security for the premises, and
  - 3. Not manually activate an alarm for any reason other than an occurrence of an event that the Alarm System was intended to report.
- B. An Alarm User shall adjust the mechanism or cause the mechanism to be adjusted so that an alarm signal audible on the exterior of an Alarm Site will sound for no longer than ten (10) minutes after being activated or fifteen (15) minutes for systems operating under Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. standards 365 or 609.
- C. An Alarm User shall have a properly Licensed Alarm Company inspect the Alarm System after three (3) false alarms in one (1) month period
- D. An Alarm User shall no use Automatic Voice Dialers.
- E. An Alarm User shall maintain at each Alarm site, a set of written operating instructions for each Alarm System.

### SECTION 4. DUTIES OF ALARM COMPANY

An Alarm Company performing Monitoring services shall:

- 1. Offer a training period in which no request for dispatch by the police or fire department will occur during the first seven (7) days after installation of an Alarm System, But rather will use that week to train the Alarm User on proper use of the Alarm System unless circumstances necessitates immediate request for response as determined by the City of Blytheville.
- 2. Attempt to verify every alarm signal, except Duress and Holdup Alarm activation before requesting a police or fire department response to Alarm System signal.
- 3. Communicate Alarm Dispatch Request to the police or fire department in a manner and form determined by the City of Blytheville.
- 4. Communicate cancellations to the police and fire departments in a manner and form determined by the City of Blytheville
- 5. Ensure that all Alarm Users of Alarm Systems equipped with a Duress or Hold-up Alarm are given adequate training as to proper use of the Duress or Holdup Alarm.
- 6. Communicate any available information (north, south, front, back, floor, etc.) about the location of the alarm.
- 7. Communicate type of alarm activation (silent or audible, interior or perimeter).
- 8. Endeavor to contact the Alarm User when an Alarm Dispatch Request is mane and
- 9. Upon enactment of this ordinance Alarm Companies that perform Monitoring services must maintain for a period of one (1) year, records relating to Alarm Dispatch Request Records must include the name, address, and phone number of the Alarm User, the Alarm System Zone(s) activated, the time of the Alarm dispatch Request and evidence of an attempt to Verify. The City of Blytheville may request copies of such records for individually named Alarm Users.

SECTION 5. FINES

A. An Alarm User shall be subject to fines depending on the number of False Alarms emitted from and Alarm System during each calendar month by using the below schedule.

# Of False Alarms	Fines
First three (3)	0
Fourth (4th)	\$25.00
Fifth (5th)	\$50.00
Six (6th)	\$75.00
More than (6)	\$100.00

- B. If Cancellation occurs prior to Law Enforcement arriving at the scene, this will not be deemed a False Alarm for the purpose of this section and no fine will be assessed.
- C. Alarm users who install a new system or who make substantial modifications to an existing system shall be given a grace period during which alarms generated by such system shall not be considered false alarms and no fine will be assessed. That grace period shall expire thirty (30) days following the installation of modification of the alarm system.

SECTION 6. SUSPENSION OF RESPONSE

The Police or Fire Department may suspend alarm response if it is determined by the Police or fire Shift Supervisor that;

- 3. The Alarm User has three (3) or more False Alarms in one (1) twelve-hour period or as instructed by the Chief of Police.
- 4. Due to non-payment of fines or fees assessed under the provisions of this ordinance.

SECTION 7. RESPONSE TO ALARMS

- A. Whenever an alarm is activated in the city thereby requiring an emergency response to the location by the police or fire department and the police or fire department does respond, and the personnel on the scene of the activated alarm shall determine whether the emergency response was in fact a required as indicated by the alarm system or whether the alarm signal was a false alarm.
- B. The police department or fire department personnel at the scene of the activated alarm system shall determine whether the alarm generated at that location was valid or a false alarm and cause a report to made of their findings. Said report will be in a style and manner as determined by the Chief of Police

SECTION 8. ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES

- A. Violation of any portion of this Ordinance constitutes a Class "C" Misdemeanor.
- B. Refusal or failure of any Alarm User to pay and fine assessment as provided for herein shall be fined not less than \$100.00 or more than \$250.00. In the event the subscriber is a corporation, partnership or other entity, the principal or employee directly responsible for the operation of the enterprise at the location from which the false alarm was initiated shall be responsible for the payment of any assessments levied in accordance with this ordinance.

For an official copy of this or other City Ordinances please contact the Blytheville City Clerks office.