

**City of Stockton Police Department
Amended Alarm Ordinance**

Police Response Policy Summary

Effective April 1, 2011, the Police Department will change its policy concerning response to an alarm activation. The following changes will go into effect:

Police response to alarm activations are now dependent on your alarm company and/or monitoring station's procedures. One of the following must apply to your alarm activation prior to your monitor contacting the Police Department:

- Video verification (VV) where a video signal is sent to the alarm company and there is visual evidence of possible criminal activity at the premises.
- Listen In or audio technology is employed and the alarm monitoring operator hears evidence that there is potential criminal activity at the premises.
- Multi-zone activation when there has been alarm activation in two or more separate monitoring zones and the alarm company's monitoring station has been unsuccessful in its attempt to contact the premises and/or representative.
- Onsite human verification of a crime or problem (eye witness).
- Enhanced Call Verification is confirmed by your monitoring station before they call the Police Department. This is defined by at least two calls, placed to two different people, coupled with a specific reason why they believe a crime or emergency exists.
- Although an alarm may not be verified as necessitating a police response, the monitoring companies will still be able to notify the police and request an all-car broadcast for instances of unknown/unverified alarms. This broadcast will allow police units that may be available or in the area of an unknown alarm to check on the location, if feasible.

The Police response changes do not apply to panic, robbery (hold-up), medical, or distress alarms. These types of alarms will continue to be treated as high-priority calls for service by the Police Department.

Your alarm company is responsible for applying the new response requirements. Any ramifications associated with your alarm company's failure to apply these requirements are the responsibility of the alarm user.

STOCKTON'S ALARM REDUCTION PROGRAM

The False Alarm Reduction Program was established to reduce false alarms within the City. The Police Department receives approximately 1,300 alarm calls each month, 98% of which are false alarms. The False Alarm Reduction Program staff works with both alarm owners and alarm companies to provide education about the City's Alarm Ordinance and the need to eliminate false alarms. Some major provisions of the ordinance, are as follows:

1. **Alarm owners must purchase an alarm permit before they install or use an alarm system** (SMC 8.44.060). The information you provide on your permit helps officers properly respond to your alarm. The initial permit fee is **\$60.25**. The permit fee helps to pay the costs associated with the Alarm Reduction Program. Businesses must renew their permits on an annual basis, and homeowners must renew their permits every three years. The renewal fee is **\$26.50**. Renewal notices are mailed to alarm owners during the November preceding the December 31st of the year the permit expires. The renewal cost is due and payable by December 31st.
2. Violation of Stockton Municipal Code, Section 8.44.230 is an infraction of the law and is punishable by a fine of \$100 for the first violation, \$200 for the second violation within one year, and \$500 for each additional violation within one year.
3. It is unlawful to have an audible alarm that sounds like a siren (SMC 8.44.170).
4. It is unlawful to have an audible alarm that rings for more than 20 minutes (SMC 8.44.100).
5. **Alarm activation without a valid permit on file** - Alarm owners may be billed a **\$293.00** service fee for each alarm activation that occurs without a valid alarm permit on file (SMC 8.44.060).
6. **Failure to Respond** - Someone with a key to the alarm location is required to respond to an activated alarm within 20 minutes (SMC 8.44.130). Access to the inside of the alarm location enables officers to investigate the alarm, verify that your home or business is safe and secure for your return, and return to other duties as soon as possible. Alarm owners are billed a **\$87.75** service fee for each failure to respond to an activated alarm within the required twenty minutes.
7. **Excessive False Alarms** - There is a **\$92.75** fee for each false alarm in excess of two during any consecutive ninety-day period (SMC 8.44.130).
8. **Direct Activation of an Alarm** - A **\$92.75** service fee will be charged for each false alarm activation of an alarm designed to communicate an emergency situation for non-emergency purposes. Emergency for the purposes of this chapter means the commission of a felony crime. (SMC 8.44.110).
9. Failure to pay the aforementioned service fees may result in termination of response by the Police Department to future alarms at the alarm location (SMC 8.44.130).

For inquiries regarding the Alarm Ordinance, please visit our Web site at www.stocktongov.com or call (209) 937-8615.

NOTE: All fee amounts are subject to change.