

Register Your Alarm System

City of Des Moines Alarm Ordinance #1360 requires all alarm systems to be registered.

You may obtain an alarm registration application by coming to the Des Moines Police Department, going to the website at www.desmoineswa.gov or by calling 206-878-3301

- Yearly cost is \$25 to register your alarm system and obtain a permit.
- Registration provides information for the 911 dispatcher and the police whenever there is an alarm.
- Alarm permits are nontransferable. If you are a new owner or occupant you must register any existing alarms so police will have updated information.
- The alarm permit decal must be displayed within 5 feet of the front entrance.

You Can Help Prevent False Alarms!

False alarms are one problem that we, working together, can easily solve. Help reduce the number of false alarms reported to police by staying alert to potential problems with your alarm system and by using your alarm system in a responsible manner. The Des Moines Police Department wants you to feel safe and secure with your alarm system, without the concerns and expense of false alarms.



What is a False Alarm?

Any alarm caused by human error or equipment problems requiring police response, with no evidence of an actual crime having been committed.

Did You Know?

- Des Moines Police Department responds to approximately 1,300 false alarms annually.
- 98 to 99% of our alarms are false, or a poorly maintained alarm system.
- It cost approximately \$150 per day for officers to respond to false alarms.
- Officers spend a significant amount of time each day handling false alarm calls.

What False Alarms Do:

- Divert police resources and potentially take police away from real emergencies.
- Lead neighbors to ignore your alarm when it goes off. In effect, your system becomes less reliable and less credible.
- Will cost you fines.

Pursuant to Des Moines Alarm Ordinance #1360

the following assessment fee will be enforced for excessive false alarms during a calendar year.

1 - 2 alarms	No charge
3rd alarm	\$100 each
4 or more alarms	\$200 each

What Causes False Alarms?

The largest single cause of false alarms is human error. Ensure that everyone who uses the alarm system knows how it works: how to turn it on and off, and what to do should anyone accidentally set it off.

A small percentage of false alarms are caused by mechanical failure or weather related problems.

If a False Alarm Occurs?

- If you are not at home, your alarm company is required by city ordinance to call you or an emergency contact before calling 911. If the alarm is a panic or holdup alarm, your alarm company should call 911 immediately.
- If you are home, first turn off (disarm) your alarm and cancel the call. You will not be charged unless the officer responds to your premises.
- Keep your cancellation instructions and monitoring company's telephone number hidden, but accessible. Remember, most alarm companies require the use of a secret code word or number to cancel a police response.

Note: In event of a cancelled false alarm, police may still respond to your premise to verify that you are the alarm user. Even if your alarm went off for only a few seconds, the police will be notified.

City of Des Moines



Alarm Registration and How to Prevent False Alarms

Des Moines Police Department
21900 11th Avenue South
Des Moines, WA 98198
Phone: (206) 878-3301
Fax: (206) 870-7626
E-mail:
alarmadmin@desmoineswa.gov

Important Numbers

- POLICE EMERGENCY.....911
- Alarm Administrator.....(206) 878-3301
- Washington Burglar & Fire Alarm Assoc. (WBFAA).....1-800-248-9272
- Better Business Bureau.....(206) 431-2222

What Can I Do to Prevent False Alarms?

- Purchase your alarm system from a reputable alarm company. Check with the Better Business Bureau and/or the Washington Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (WBFAA) on the status of companies you are dealing with. Contact friends or neighbors who have alarm systems for recommendations.
- Know your alarm system and share that knowledge with those who need to know. Make sure everyone in your home or business has manually operated the alarm system and understands what to do if it is accidentally set off.
- Secure all doors and windows before arming your alarm system.
- Keep your alarm system maintained. Alarm users should have their system checked and serviced on a regular basis by a professional, well-trained technician. If you have any doubts about your alarm system, call your alarm company immediately.

