

OFFICE OF CHIEF OF POLICE
OAKLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Personnel

DATE: 1 Sep 10

SUBJECT: Revision of Departmental General Order Z-3, ALARM
SYSTEMS (Rev.22 Mar 00)

The purpose of this order is to set forth Department policy and procedures regarding the False Alarm Reduction Program to abate false and misused alarms. The Department's primary concerns, when responding to alarms, are public safety, officer safety, and the apprehension of criminals.

The Evaluation Coordinator for this order shall be the Fiscal Services Division Manager, who, without further notice, shall forward the required report to the Chief of Police on or by 1 Mar 11.

The Evaluation Coordinator shall receive, review and document the acceptance or rejection of all comments and/or recommendations received prior to submitting his/her six-month evaluation report.

The Evaluation Coordinator shall forward a copy of the six-month evaluation report, along with the comments/recommendations received, to the Office of Inspector General to be maintained in the appropriate Departmental General Order archive folder.

Personnel shall acknowledge receipt, review, and understanding of this directive in accordance with the provisions of DGO A-1, DEPARTMENTAL PUBLICATIONS.

By order of



Anthony W. Batts
Chief of Police

Date Signed: 9/31/10



DEPARTMENTAL
GENERAL
ORDER

Effective Date:
1 Sep 10

Z-3

Evaluation Coordinator:
Fiscal Services Division Manager

Index as:

Evaluation Due Date:
1 Mar 11

Alarm Systems

Automatic Revision Cycle:
3 Years

ALARM SYSTEMS

The purpose of this order is to set forth Department policy and procedures regarding the False Alarm Reduction Program to abate false and misused alarms. The Department's primary concerns, when responding to alarms, are public safety, officer safety, and the apprehension of criminals.

I. TERMINOLOGY

A. Alarm User

Any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity who (which) uses an alarm system at a particular alarm site.

B. False Alarm

An alarm signal is "false" when it is activated by accident, malfunction or negligence when no crime has occurred.

C. Misused Alarm

An alarm is "misused" when the owner or responsible person deliberately activates the signal for some purpose other than the intended use, such as activating a robbery alarm to summon assistance in dealing with a shoplifter.

D. Subscriber

An alarm user who is a customer of an alarm business.

II. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- A. The Department has established the False Alarm Reduction Unit (FARU) aligned under the Fiscal Services Division supervised by a civilian coordinator (False Alarm Reduction Unit Coordinator) designated by the Chief of Police.
- B. The Department contracts with an alarm management company to assist the FARU Coordinator with the administration and management of the False Alarm Reduction Program.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Field Officers
 - 1. Officers investigating an audible or silent alarm shall complete the appropriate report to document the incident and any corrective measures taken (e.g., Crime Report, Assignment Report, or Insecure Premise Report).
 - 2. Security Check & Walk-Through
 - a. Officers shall conduct a security check of the premise/facility when an alarm has occurred to ascertain if the premise/facility is secure; and/or
 - b. Upon subscriber request, officers shall conduct a walk-through of the premise/facility where an alarm has occurred.
 - 3. Disposition Procedures
 - a. Upon clearing an alarm call assignment, officers shall assign a disposition code to the call. Officers have discretion when using the false alarm disposition codes. If a situation occurs that does not fit within the criteria listed, officers shall provide a brief description in the "Comment" field in the Computer Assisted Dispatching (CAD) System.

NOTE: The alarm user is billed based on the responding officer's disposition.

- b. In the event an officer subsequently determines a crime has occurred at an alarm location which was earlier designated as a FALSE alarm, he/she shall ensure the disposition code is corrected.
- c. Disposition Codes shall be assigned as follows:

CODE	DEFINITION	DESCRIPTION
ALC	Canceled	Disposition code used by dispatchers when an alarm activation is verified false by the alarm company prior to the dispatch of officers. Also applies when the officer is not dispatched to activations caused by power outages.
ALG	General False Alarm*	Alarm activation of general alarm caused by alarm system failure, malfunction, negligence, accident or misuse.
ALP	Panic False Alarm*	Alarm activation of panic alarm caused by alarm system failure, malfunction, negligence, accident or misuse.
ALR	Robbery False Alarm*	Alarm activation of robbery alarm caused by alarm system failure, malfunction, negligence, accident or misuse.
ALV	Valid Alarm	Alarm activation where the primary responding officer finds evidence that a crime occurred.
ALW	Alarm Caused by Weather	Alarm activation caused by severe weather or acts of nature (<i>ex. severe wind storm, earthquake</i>).

* Indicates Billable Code

- 4. If it has been determined that an alarm has been misused, the officer shall document misuse details in "Comment" field in the CAD System.

B. False Alarm Reduction Unit

The False Alarm Reduction Unit shall be responsible for administering the False Alarm Reduction Program in compliance with City of Oakland Municipal Code Section 8.02 and the provisions of this order.

C. FARU Coordinator

The FARU Coordinator shall be the final authority involving alarm user issues and additionally be responsible for the following:

- 1. Act as the Alarm Appeals Officer and administer the appeals process in accordance with Oakland Municipal Code, Chapter 8.02.090;

2. Extract and forward CAD information to the contracted alarm management company for the purpose of billing false alarm fees;
3. Ensure the alarm management company is provided with existing alarm user information for input into the program database;
4. Liaison with the alarm management company regarding alarm and alarm user data, billing, and the collection of fees and appeals;
5. Ensure alarm users are provided with False Alarm Reduction Program training and education;
6. Analyze CAD data related to reported, false, and misused alarms; and
7. Review and evaluate the efficacy of the provisions of the OMC and this order and make recommendations to enhance the program.

D. Communications Section

The Communications Section shall:

1. Ensure alarm monitoring companies have attempted two (2) calls to the alarm user or designee at different phone numbers to verify the alarm, prior to dispatching an officer; and
2. Make a reasonable effort to obtain pertinent information relative to alarm site hazards (e.g., guard dog on site or other officer safety issues).

III. FALSE ALARM ABATEMENT PROCEDURES

All false alarms shall be charged at a rate established in the City's Master Fee Schedule.

A. Misused Alarm Abatement Procedures

1. General
 - a. In the event an alarm is activated for a purpose other than its intended use, the alarm user shall be subject to the General False Alarm fee in accordance with the rate established in the City's Master Fee Schedule.

- b. Misuse or excessive use may subject a subscriber to fees and/or revocation of the alarm permit.
 - 2. Robbery (Hold-Up)/Duress (Panic) Alarms
 - a. In the event a robbery/panic alarm is activated for a purpose other than its intended use, the alarm user shall be subject to the Specific False Alarm fee in accordance with the rate established in the City's Master Fee Schedule.
 - b. Misuse or excessive use may subject a subscriber to fees and/or revocation of the alarm permit.
- B. No-Response Status
 - 1. The FARU Coordinator may place a subscriber into a "No-Response" status under any of the following conditions:
 - a. More than three (3) false alarms; or
 - b. Continued misuse of an alarm.
 - 2. The FARU shall notify the Communications Section of any subscriber placed on or removed from "No-Response" status.
- C. Fee Appeal

False alarm fee appeals shall be imposed in accordance with the provisions of OMC Section 8.02.090.

By Order of



Anthony W. Batts
Chief of Police

Date Signed: 8/31/10