



WHY WAS THE FALSE ALARM ORDINANCE CREATED?

False Alarms present a serious threat to the effectiveness of the Pinal County Sheriff's Office and to the safety of our citizens. False Alarm Calls are costly and dangerous since they divert Sheriff Deputies from proactive crime prevention efforts. They also delay response to calls which may be a true emergency. *What is a False Alarm you may ask? A False Alarm is any alarm caused by human error or equipment problems resulting in law enforcement response, with no evidence of an actual crime having been committed.*

During the year 2008, the total number of alarm calls received by the Sheriff's Office, was 3,995. Of these: only 32 were actual alarm calls resulting in an incident report.

WE HAVE A PROBLEM!

The Pinal County Board of Supervisors adopted an Alarm System Ordinance to regulate the amount of false alarms which occur. The ordinance was implemented, effective January 1, 2003. All alarm users are required to obtain an annual Alarm Permit, which costs \$10. Permits are renewed annually for an additional \$10.00.

With an estimated 25% annual increase in alarm systems nationwide, the police departments and county sheriff offices are overwhelmed with false alarm calls. This is resulting in stricter ordinances, severe fines and/or no response policies. The Pinal County Alarm System Ordinance will regulate the amount of false alarm calls the Sheriff Office receives, by setting stringent guidelines to the alarm users on how to properly operate and utilize their alarm systems. This will assist the Sheriff's Office in reducing unnecessary responses and enhance the effectiveness of your alarm systems.

If you have any questions regarding the Alarm Permit Program, please contact the Pinal County Sheriff Office – Alarm Unit at (520) 866-5132 or (520) 866-5173. A copy of the Ordinance and Permit Application are available at our website: www.pinalcountyaz.gov.

TIPS IN HELPING ELIMINATE FALSE ALARM CALLS



Even though the sheriff Office cannot recommend a security company, we can provide you with tips to help eliminate false alarms:

- Have your Alarm System installed by a qualified and reputable company. Obtain references and the business address of the Alarm Company.
- Program door alarm sensors to have (at least) a 45 second delay before activation.
- Make sure any panic buttons are not accessible to young/small children, who might push the button out of curiosity.
- Have your alarm system maintained and inspected annually. During this inspection, make sure all door and window contacts meet properly and all batteries are checked and/or replaced.
- In the event of a false alarm, find out what caused it and take steps to ensure that it does not happen again.
- Be especially watchful and alert after any unexplained alarm activation.
- Cancel all False Alarm calls immediately
- Have your alarm company provide you with Orientation and Training. Ensure everyone who uses your alarm system has been trained in its operation and knows the code word. This includes: employees, janitors, delivery personnel, domestic help, family and friends.
- Make sure your alarm system can send a signal to the monitoring facility informing them of a power outage at your residence or business.
- Make sure your alarm company verifies all alarm activations before calling the Sheriff Office.
- Give your monitoring company detailed instructions about who to call when your alarm is activated, and what they should do when they receive an alarm signal.
- Notify your alarm company if you will be away from home for an extended period of time. Also, notify them when you return. Give them your revised call list for the time frame you are away.
- Make sure pets are not loose in a room with motion detectors.
- Do not leave balloons or other movable items in a room that has a motion sensor.
- Be aware of changes in your environment and how they affect your alarm system. New pets, design changes, new houseplants, air conditioning use and promotional or holiday displays can all set off an alarm system.
- Make sure all door and windows latch securely to eliminate false alarms from wind or from someone accidentally jiggling your door. Install and use dead bolts.
- Eliminate any rodent or other pest/insect problems from your home or business. These are common causes of alarm activations.
- Quickly repair broken windows or holes in roofs to ensure that birds, cats or other animals can't enter and set off your alarm.

If you have any questions regarding the False Alarm Awareness Program, please contact the Pinal County Sheriff Office – Alarm Unit at (520) 866-5132 or (520) 866-5173. A copy of the Ordinance and Permit Application are available at our website: www.pinalcountyaz.gov.

REMEMBER – YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION!