



Manteca Police Department

David Bricker, Chief of Police



May 22, 2009

Dear Manteca Alarm User:

The Manteca Police Department has been responding to burglar alarm calls for decades. In instances where an Officer responds to an alarm call and catches a burglar on site, for us it's like hitting a home run in the World Series. Cops love catching burglars. Unfortunately, a problem exists because 99% of the alarm calls we respond to are false alarms. This number has held steady for many years and continues even today. Officers are most often responding to burglar alarms caused by operator error, faulty equipment, pets, store banners, cleaning crews, and spiders. Only 1% of the time officers respond to a legitimate burglar alarm has a crime actually occurred.

In an effort to find a balance between the need to respond to alarm signals and the potential burden on police resources, Manteca is implementing a new alarm management ordinance and policy to help reduce unnecessary alarm notifications made to police.

Effective July 1, 2009 it will be the responsibility of electronic security services or alarm monitoring companies to take the extra steps to verify an alarm is an actual crime in progress or other problem before notifying police. Verification procedures can include sound/video of a crime in progress, an eyewitness that can confirm there is a problem or a private security guard who can go to the scene to confirm whether or not a crime is in progress. Enhance Call Verification or ECV is also an important standard requirement whereby at least two calls to two different phone numbers have been made by the alarm company to verify an actual emergency exists. An alarm is also considered valid if there has been activation of more than one device or in more than one location such as a door or window followed by an internal motion activation. (See www.mantecapd.com for entire ordinance.)

Please be advised that panic, robbery (hold-up), medical or duress alarms will not be included in the verified response policy. These types of alarms will continue to be treated as high priority calls for service by the Police Department.

MOST IMPORTANTLY:

The Manteca Police Department discourages you from responding to verify an alarm yourself. This is the responsibility of your alarm company. There is a potential danger by responding to an alarm activation where you might encounter a suspect or a law enforcement officer who may arrive at the scene and confuse you with a criminal. Insist that your alarm company take responsibility for alarm verification.



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The new ordinance is the result of extensive research including looking at the impact of ordinances in other communities such as Modesto, Las Vegas and Milwaukee. We also considered input from the California Alarm Association (CAA) and determined the new ordinance would be based on a Model Ordinance and Alarm Industry Best Practices that include ECV as a form of alarm verification.

I encourage you to go to www.mantecapd.com and review the ordinance, the fee structure and where you can download an alarm permit. The permit is required and is free, however if we respond to a false alarm you the owner will be billed for services.

I am confident that this change is right for Manteca and will improve the quality of your alarm services. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Bricker".

David Bricker
Chief of Police