


STRATFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT 	Type of Directive: Policy and Procedure	Updated: 04-30-2024
	Title: Alarm Response and Review	No. 7.7
	Issuing Authority: Chief Joseph McNeil	Issued: 10-09-2019
	Reference: Tier 2.5.20 History: 01-15-19, 10-09-19, 7.7, 7.7.1, 7.7.2	

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the policy is to establish guidelines for the response to alarms.

POLICY:

It shall be the policy of the Stratford Police Department to respond to and investigate commercial, residential and automobile alarms when activated.

PROCEDURE:

Dispatcher Responsibility

Upon receipt of an active alarm officers will respond to the scene and conduct a check of the residence, business or vehicle and attempt to determine if the alarm is valid or false.

Response and Investigation

Officers dispatched to business/commercial or private alarms will investigate the cause of the alarm in a thorough professional manner. The officers will attempt to ascertain the cause for the alarm and will categorize such alarm using the definitions of alarms contained within this policy.

If an alarm is found to be false alarm, documentation as to the condition(s) surrounding area and the incident found during the investigation shall be made. The investigating officer will show that the alarm was not valid in their report.

If there is any doubt on the part of the investigating officer as to whether the alarm was valid or not, a supervisor shall make the final determination. If after supervisor review there remains doubt benefit shall favor the owner of the property (2.5.20).

Hold Up Alarm/Panic Alarm

In the event of a "Hold Up" or "Panic" alarm, Officers will respond expeditiously. Upon observing the location Officers should wait until Dispatch personnel make contact with the representative or person of record for the alarm before approaching the location.

If the alarm is false the incident will be documented by the investigating Officers.

In the event that the alarm is valid then an investigation will be conducted by the Officers and documented.

Low Priority Alarms

Low priority alarms (i.e., water flow, motor vehicle) may be handled by one officer on a code one response unless otherwise directed.

Enforcement Of Alarm Ordinance

It shall be the policy of the Stratford Police Department to provide a means for which Officers may address repeated false alarms from a single source when it becomes a nuisance.

False Alarm

In the event of a false alarm the incident will be documented as well as the information for any key holder or representative that may respond.

- **Error:** Alarm is set off by mistake or when the police dispatcher is not properly notified of a test (i.e., accidental by key holder.) This is considered a false alarm.
- **Malfunction:** Alarm activation due to problems within the system or due to neglect of the system on the part of the owner. This is considered a false alarm.

Valid Alarm

Signs of entry, attempted entry, vandalism, or crime is apparent. This shall include causes not under the direct control or responsibility of the owner (i.e., weather and utility failure.) If the alarm is valid then an investigation will be conducted and documented by the responding officers.

Action Taken

When a false alarm has been determined officers may check with the dispatcher on the number of false alarms at that address. The first two (2) false alarms in a calendar year shall warrant a written warning to be issued to the property owner, or responding agent thereof, notifying them that the alarm system is defective and fines will be instituted after the second warning.

On the third false alarm, and every false alarm thereafter within the calendar year, a town ordinance ticket may be issued. The amount of the fine will be \$100.00 for violation of the Town Alarm Ordinance.

Officers will make out the ticket to the business or property address listing the name of the person accepting the ticket. The ticket and the pink copy of the incident report will then be left with that person.

If there is no property owner or responding agent to the alarm the ticket will be completed by the investigation officer. The ticket, along with an incident report, shall be turned into the Desk Sergeant to be delivered at another time. Missing information shall be completed on the ticket at the time of delivery.

If officers should respond to the same location or address several times in one day, a ticket may be issued for each response after the second response. **(2.5.20)**

An alarm ordinance ticket recipient wishing to contest such ticket shall be instructed in the Alarm Fine Review process (listed below).

Special Considerations

In the event of a widespread weather or utility problem, a master complaint shall be used to record all alarms. Property owners shall not be not be sited for this type of alarm drop. The records supervisor shall be notified, whether electronic or written communication, to review alarms that came in prior to the master complaint being started. These alarms shall be reviewed for cause and voided out if, in fact, related to the weather or utility problem.

Alarm Fine Review

It shall be the policy of the Stratford Police Department to provide a means for home/business owners to grieve fines resulting from alarm ordinance violations.

Any alarm owner questioning a summons issued to them by an officer of this department shall first speak with the Desk Sergeant on duty. All attempts will be made at this time to answer or explain the actions of the department and the officer.

If the alarm owner wishes to have the incident investigated further, they will have to come to headquarters and complete an Alarm Ordinance Review Form. Upon completion of this form by the alarm owner the Desk Sergeant will review the facts surrounding the incident to include any comments of the investigating officer. All information will be given to the shift commander for review to include the completed form.

The results of the shift commander's investigation with recommendations will be documented prior to being forwarded to the Chief of Police for review.

The Chief of Police shall review all material and record the results of the review process.

The alarm owner shall be notified of the results of the review process. All documentation of the review process shall be attached to the complaint form and filed.