

How To Avoid A False Alarm

Alarm owners should maintain their alarm system in proper working order. An alarm owner should be well versed on how the alarm system operates, and how to use it. Business owners with alarm systems are encouraged to have training sessions with employees on how to properly operate the business' alarm system.

The City of Merced False Alarm Ordinance is one of many in the State of California. If you would like to obtain a copy of the False Alarm Ordinance, please send your request to the City Clerk's Office, 678 W 18th Street, Merced CA 95340.

The Merced Police Department is responsible for managing the False Alarm Ordinance. If you have any questions, or need further information about the ordinance, please contact the Merced Police Department Alarm Reduction Unit.

The Benefits Of Having Your Alarm Permit On File With Us:

- ☑ You Avoid up to \$250 per day "No Alarm Permit On File" Fee.
- ☑ You Can Help Save The Merced Police Department Valuable Time.
- ☑ We Have A Way To Contact A Key Holder To Your Residence Or Business in the event of an Emergency.



For More Information Contact:

Merced Police Department
Alarm Reduction Unit
611 W 22nd St
Merced, CA 95340

Phone: 209-388-7800

Email: Alarms@cityofmerced.org

City of Merced

False Alarm Ordinance



**Information You Need
To Know If You Have An
Alarm System In Your
Home Or Business**

The Alarm Ordinance

The Merced Police Department will began enforcement action on the False Alarm Ordinance on July 18, 2016.

The Merced Police Department responds to an average of 372 false alarms per month resulting in the loss of an enormous amount of valuable time. Most false alarms responded to are a result of a lack of proper maintenance and/or carelessness of the owner or operator of the alarm system.

Responding to false alarms results in costs in excess of \$370,000 in personnel, time and equipment each year. In addition, when police are responding to false alarms, they may be delayed in responding to true emergencies or situations in which a crime has actually occurred.

The Alarm Permit

All homeowners and business owners having an alarm system, which is monitored or draws public attention are required to apply for an Alarm Permit. The Merced Police Department sends Alarm Permit applications upon request. The applications can also be downloaded from the City of Merced Website at:

www.cityofmerced.org/police

There is **no fee** for the Alarm Permit, however there can be up to a \$250 charge per day will be assessed for those who have no permit on file.

False Alarm Service Fees

The following is the fee schedule that will be assessed for Merced Police Department response within a twelve month period:

After the fifth response the location will be placed on a **no** response by the Merced Police Department for one full year.

Number of False Alarms	Permitted Fee	Non-Permitted Fee
First–Second Response	No Charge	\$100
Third Response	\$50 (subject to waiver)	\$150
Fourth–Fifth Response	\$50	\$150
Sixth + Response	\$100	\$200

Appealing Service Fees

If an alarm owner believes they have been charged unjustly, they may contact the Merced Police Department Alarm Reduction Unit to request an *Alarm Fees Appeal Form*. The form is also available on the City of Merced Website:

www.cityofmerced.org/police

An alarm service fee *may* be waived, if the alarm owner or operator successfully completes a *False Alarm Reduction Class*.

If the Alarm Reduction Unit finds that the responses were caused by the negligence of the alarm company or faulty equipment, it is the **owners responsibility** to pursue payment by the alarm company. The Alarm Ordinance has no provision for directly charging the alarm company.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a False Alarm?

The activation of an alarm system through mechanical failure, malfunction, improper installation or maintenance, or the negligence of the owner, lessee, or his/her employees or agents. Alarms caused by acts of nature such as earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, or other violent, uncontrollable acts of nature shall **not** be considered false alarms.

What is not a False Alarm?

If you find evidence of a criminal activity or unauthorized intrusion, call the Merced Police Department at 209-385-6905. Ask the Officer to check your address for a prior alarm call, and **ask the Officer to file the crime report under the SAME CASE NUMBER as your alarm call.**

What is an Alarm System?

An alarm system is any mechanical or electrical device designed for the detection of unauthorized entry to your home or business. When activated, many alarm systems will emit a sound or will transmit a signal to your Alarm Company that an emergency situation exists. Even if your alarm system is not monitored, you are still required to have a Alarm Permit on file, and may be subject to fees if your alarm is activated in error.