

October 22, 2008

Dear Alarm Company,

The Seattle Municipal Code requires that each alarm company<sup>\*1</sup> “shall supply the Seattle Police Department personnel with their permit number/[Unique Identifying Number] (UIN) at the time an alarm is called in to the Seattle Police Department.”<sup>\*2</sup> This provision of the SMC needs to be adhered to on a consistent basis. The City’s Department of Executive Administration – Revenue Consumer Affairs provides licensing for alarm companies and only alarm companies properly licensed with the City of Seattle are issued a UIN. In an effort to further reduce false alarms in the City of Seattle, **effective January 1, 2009 the Seattle Police Department will institute a policy of not dispatching officers to alarm calls when the alarm company fails to provide a UIN.**

Only alarm companies that monitor their own alarms and have a total of less than three alarm systems or business locations within the City limits are exempt from this provision. If your company falls into this category, you should immediately contact the False Alarm Unit for additional provisions you will need to follow when calling in requests for dispatch.

When companies have an existing UIN, but do not have current licenses and continue to use their UIN, the Seattle Police Department will recommend the suspension, revocation or non-renewal of the alarm license to Revenue and Consumer Affairs. Alarm companies can determine if they are properly licensed checking our website <http://www.cityofseattle.net/police/programs/alarms/>. Questions regarding licensing and obtaining a UIN should be directed to Department of Executive Administration – Revenue Consumer Affairs Inspector Sonny Ortiz at (206) 684-8401 or Inspector Terry Boyle at (206) 684-8406.

The Seattle Municipal Code further requires that alarm companies utilize enhanced call verification (ECV)<sup>\*3</sup> every time they call in a burglary/motion/intrusion alarm.<sup>\*4</sup> Alarm companies must comply with this requirement. Therefore, **effective January 1, 2009 the Seattle Police Department will institute a policy of not dispatching officers to alarm calls when the alarm company has not followed the ECV provision of the law.** Alarm Companies will be instructed to call back when they have made two call verification attempts and must be able to provide the numbers called.

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\*1 For the purposes of this notice, alarm company shall mean the company that has a contract with a subscriber for their alarm system whether or not that company actually monitors the alarm or contracts it out to a third party.

\*2 SMC 6.10.010 (E)

\*3 Enhanced Call Verification (ECV) is defined as a monitoring procedure requiring that a minimum of two phone calls be made prior to making an alarm dispatch request in an effort to verify the alarm. Other methods of enhanced call verification are available under SMC 10.08.165 (D), but the phone call is most common.

\*4 SMC 10.08.165 (D)

The Seattle Police Department will not dispatch officers based on requests for dispatch to monitored burglar alarms from unlicensed alarm companies or alarm companies with suspended or revoked licenses. In the event that a human activated alarm (robbery, panic, duress), alarm call with exigent circumstances<sup>\*5</sup> (i.e. multiple trips) or an alarm at a sensitive location<sup>\*6</sup> is called in and no UIN is given or ECV has not been utilized, Seattle Police will dispatch officers to the call. This is consistent with current exceptions to the existing No Response policy.

We further request that alarm companies make every effort to specify alarm location by zone name. For both burglary/intrusion alarms as well as panic/robbery/duress alarms it is important for officer safety to know exactly where the alarm was activated (i.e. panel/key fob panic, basement motion, kitchen glass break). For companies that do not currently provide this level of specific information, we encourage you to begin doing so now.

In an effort to notify all alarm companies of this new policy, the Seattle Police Department will notify, by mail, all alarm companies licensed with the City, as well as companies identified as having customers in Seattle, but unlicensed. Notification will also be made through the Washington Burglar & Fire Alarm Association (WBFAA) and the Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA) to their members. Lastly, a press release will be given to local media outlets informing the public of this new policy.

We also request that you encourage your customers to attend our alarm user's class in order to educate them further about police response, responsible alarm ownership, the No Response Program and false alarm prevention. This class is free and offered at least once each month. Attendance also provides a one-time alarm fee waiver to the attendee. You may refer your customers to us through the contact information below.

Should you have any questions regarding this new policy, or would like to receive copies of policies related to the City's False Alarm response program, please contact the False Alarm Unit using one of the methods below:

- Phone: (206) 684-7713
- E-mail: [False.Alarms@Seattle.gov](mailto:False.Alarms@Seattle.gov)
- Address: Seattle Police Department  
False Alarm Unit #B100A  
P.O. Box 34986  
Seattle, WA 98124-4986

Sincerely,

R. Gil Kerlikowske  
Chief of Police

Detective Christopher Hall  
False Alarm Administrator

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<sup>\*5</sup> This will be for the call-takers to determine what is an exigent circumstance. If there is any doubt, the call will be dispatched.

<sup>\*6</sup> It will also be up to the call-takers to determine what is a sensitive location based on current events.