

CITY OF BARSTOW

CALIFORNIA

POLICIES and PROCEDURES MANUAL:

POLICE

Subject:

SECURITY ALARMS

INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of the Barstow Police Department to promptly respond to all security alarm activations occurring within the City and to properly investigate and document the cause and result of each alarm response.

To assure consistency in responding to and recording security alarm activity and in conducting the proper inquiry into alarm activations, as noted in Chapter 5.26, Barstow Municipal Code, the Barstow Police Department has adopted the following procedure.

ALARM NOTIFICATION

1. *Under normal circumstances, security alarm activations will reach the Police Dispatch Center in one of the following ways:*
 - a. *Through the alarm monitoring device located in the Police Dispatch Center.*
 - b. *Through a telephone message produced by a so-called "telephone alarm system".*
 - c. *Through an answering service.*
 - d. *Through an officer or citizen who has been alerted to a potential crime by an on-site audible alarm.*

Upon notification of an alarm activation, the Police Dispatcher shall initiate the proper police response.

2. *After dispatching an appropriate police response to the site of a security alarm activation, the Police Dispatcher shall locate the appropriate alarm permit in a ledger maintained by the police communications center.*

The Police Dispatcher must locate the proper Alarm Permit as rapidly as possible for the purpose of recording the proper alarm information and disposition as noted in the following sections.

3. *The Police Dispatcher shall record all alarm activity upon the Alarm User Permit maintained in the ledger at the Police Communications Center in the following manner:*
 - a. *No entry shall be made in the event of legitimate security alarm signals caused by break ins or by unsuccessful attacks upon the premises.*

Reference:

Effective Date

Revision No.

Section

March 01, 1988

Page 1 of 5

315

CITY OF BARSTOW

CALIFORNIA

POLICIES and PROCEDURES MANUAL:

POLICE

Subject:

SECURITY ALARMS - continued

- b. Entries shall be made in all instances of false alarms. The Police Dispatcher shall enter the appropriate information and disposition of each security alarm, as provided by the responding officers.

Dispositions will include EE for employee error; MF for malfunction; and UNK for unknown.

The use of an "UNK" disposition is discouraged except in those cases where the actual cause of the false alarm cannot be accurately determined.

Alarms caused by electrical power failure shall not be considered false alarms and no entries shall be made.

- c. In those instances in which a valid Alarm User Permit is not on file, the Police Dispatcher shall notify responding officers of that fact. Such officers shall notify the owner or the individual responding to the security alarm activation on behalf of the business or residence of the Permit requirement and attempt to determine why a permit has not been acquired.
- d. In those instances in which a valid Alarm User Permit is not on file, the Police Dispatcher shall notify the Chief of Police via the chain of command so that appropriate administrative and corrective action may be taken.

INVESTIGATIVE RESPONSE

1. Officers of the Barstow Police Department shall respond to all security alarm activations as though a crime is in progress and in a manner consistent with applicable policies and procedures of the Barstow Police Department.
2. Upon arrival at the site of an alarm activation, the officer in charge of the site shall make a determination as to the cause of the alarm activation.
3. Once an alarm has been determined to have been valid, i.e., caused by something other than a criminal act, the officer in charge at the site shall conduct a brief investigation into the cause of the alarm activation.

Reference:

Effective Date

Revision No.

Section

March 01, 1988

Page 2 of 5

317

CITY OF BARSTOW

CALIFORNIA

POLICIES and PROCEDURES MANUAL:

POLICE

Subject: SECURITY ALARMS - continued

Such officer shall notify the Police Communication Center of the disposition reached as a result of his investigation utilizing one of the following dispositions:

- a. Employee Error - EE
- b. Malfunction - MF
- c. Unknown - UNK

A disposition of UNK should only be used when there is no accurate or reliable information upon which to reach another disposition.

4. Whenever possible, the on-site officer in charge shall make a determination as to whether or not the alarm user has obtained an Alarm User Permit and whether or not such permit is posted on the premises as required by Section 5.26.050 (b) (1), Barstow Municipal Code.

In those instances in which a valid permit is not on file in the Police Communication Center, a desk complaint report shall be made by the dispatcher. The desk complaint should include the following information.

- a. Name of business/resident
- b. Time, date and address of occurrence
- c. Type of alarm and alarm company, if any
- d. The name and telephone number of any responding citizens
- e. Any other information deemed pertinent by the reporting officer

A copy of all such desk complaints shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police via the chain of command for appropriate administrative/corrective action.

EXCESSIVE FALSE ALARMS

Excessive false alarms are defined in Section 5.26.080 (a) (1), Barstow Municipal Code and are grounds for suspension or revocation of the user's alarm system permit and disconnection of services. It shall be the responsibility of the Police Dispatcher to review the alarm permit card whenever a false alarm is recorded to determine if there has been an excessive number of false alarms at a particular location. If excessive false alarms are indicated, the Police Dispatcher shall notify the Chief of Police via the chain of command by forwarding a photostatic copy of the alarm permit card to his office. At the same time, the

Reference:

Effective Date

Revision No.

Section

March 01, 1988

1

Page 3 of 5

315

CITY OF BARSTOW

CALIFORNIA

POLICIES and PROCEDURES MANUAL:

POLICE

Subject:

SECURITY ALARMS - continued

Police Dispatcher will make an entry immediately below the last false alarm entry that a copy has been forwarded to the Chief of Police's office and the date. Alarms are considered excessive when they reach or exceed two false alarms in any thirty-day period, three false alarms in any 180-day period, or four false alarms in any 360-day period.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The Chief of Police shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate action is taken in situations where excessive false alarms have been recorded. A file shall be maintained under the supervision of the Chief of Police as a record of what action has been taken in each specific situation. The following Administrative procedure shall be followed:

1. One false alarm in excess of the maximum allowable number of false alarms for any given period as described in Section 5.26.080 (a)(1); warning letter is sent to alarm subscriber. The letter shall include a brief statement as to the alarm user's responsibility to correct the causes of the false alarms and indicating the Police Department's willingness to work with the subscriber to help solve the problem.
2. Two false alarms in excess of the maximum allowable number of false alarms in any given period and a previous warning letter has been sent. Contact shall be made by the Chief of Police or a designated representative thereof, with the person in charge of the business or residence recording the excessive false alarms. The contacting officer shall help whenever possible to solve the problems leading to the excessive number of false alarms. However, subscribers should be reminded that it is their responsibility (and that of the alarm company if applicable) to resolve the problems leading to the excessive number of false alarms. The subscriber shall be advised that continued false alarms may result in a suspension and revocation of the subscriber's permit. All contacts made pursuant hereto shall be documented by an incident report.

Reference:

Effective Date

Revision No.

Section

March 01, 1988

Page 4 of 5

515

CITY OF BARSTOW

CALIFORNIA

POLICIES and PROCEDURES MANUAL:

POLICE

Subject:

SECURITY ALARMS - continued

3. Three false alarms in excess of the maximum allowable number of false alarms in any given period and actions described in one and two above have been taken, constitutes ground for a suspension of the user's permit. When it is determined that a permit shall be suspended for excessive alarms, a letter shall be sent to the business or residence for which the permit has been issued giving notice that the permit is being suspended, the reason why, and how the suspension may be appealed. Suspended permits shall be pulled from the Communication Center ledger and forwarded to the Chief of Police with an entry that the permit has been suspended. A copy of the letter will be sent to the alarm company who will be expected to disconnect the service to the location in question as provided in the ordinance. Suspensions shall automatically become revocations within fifteen calendar days unless the subscriber appeals the suspension. The subscriber's copy of a revoked permit shall be surrendered to the Director of Administrative Services within fifteen days unless an appeal has been made in writing as described in the following section.
4. An alarm user whose permit has been suspended may take steps to have the suspension of the permit rescinded if such action is taken prior to the suspension becoming a revocation. The user shall be requested to present a written appeal in the form of a letter directed to the Chief of Police stating the reasons why it is felt the permit should not be suspended or revoked. If it appears that the user has taken appropriate measures to prevent future reoccurrence of the problem, or that the permit was suspended unjustly, the Chief of Police may rescind the suspension. All letters or written appeals shall receive a written response indicating whether the user's appeal has been approved or denied by the Chief of Police. If a permit is reinstated as a result of an appeal, it shall be returned to the Communications Center file with an entry made as to the date of reinstatement.
5. If an alarm user's permit has been revoked and the user continues to use his alarm system knowing that his permit has been revoked, the user may be prosecuted as provided in the Barstow Municipal Code. A crime report shall be written giving specific details of the violation, including date of suspension and date(s) of any further alarm activations. A copy of all crime reports for violations of the alarm ordinance shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police via the chain of command.

Reference:

Effective Date

Revision No.

Section

March 01, 1988

Page 5 of 5

315