

False Alarm Service Fees

If the Modesto Police Department responds to a **verified alarm** at your business or residence, and it is determined that your alarm was **false**, the following is the fee schedule that will be assessed for police response within a twelve month period:

No Alarm Permit On File	\$200
First Response	No Charge
Second Response	\$50
Third Response	\$100
Fourth Response	\$200
Fifth Response	\$400
Key Holder Refusal To Respond	\$100

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

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 Modesto 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, 1010 Tenth Street, Modesto CA 95354.

The Modesto 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 Modesto Police Department Alarm Reduction Unit.

Modesto Police Department
Alarm Reduction Unit
600 Tenth Street
P.O. Box 3313
Modesto, CA 95353

Phone: 209-572-9626
Fax: 209-572-9649

Email: AlarmReductionUnit@ModestoPD.com

To:

City of Modesto

False Alarm Ordinance

Effective
November 1, 2006



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

History Of The Alarm Ordinance

The Modesto Police Department began enforcement action on the False Alarm Ordinance on September 1, 1993. The focus of this ordinance was to reduce the number of false alarms that Officers respond to, since 99% of all Burglar Alarms are false.

The Modesto Police Department responds to an average of 785 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 a cost of \$315,000 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 situation in which a crime has actually occurred.

Since 1993, the Modesto Police Department has attempted to reduce False Alarms by imposing increasingly harsh fines for alarm users who experience multiple false alarms each year, hosting Alarm Reduction Classes, and even placing addresses on “no response” if there have been more than five false alarms in a twelve month period.

To date, there has been no reduction in the number of false alarms that Officers respond to each month. Because of this, beginning *November 1, 2006*, the Modesto Police Department will begin utilizing *Verified Response* as a means of reducing the number of false burglar alarms that officers respond to.

What Does It Mean?

Due to the high number of false alarms, the Modesto Police Department will not routinely respond unless additional information is received to verify the validity of the alarm. This information can be obtained through the use of on-site audio and/or video equipment, or on-site witness reports (private security) of glass breakage, suspicious persons in the area of the alarm, or suspects observed entering the premise.

Many alarm companies will offer an option to purchase the audio and/or video equipment needed to verify your alarm, and some Alarm Companies will also contract with a private security company who will respond to verify your alarm. You should talk with your Alarm Company to find the method of verification that works best for you.

The Modesto Police Department recommends that alarm owners do **not** respond to verify their own alarm, or send neighbors or friends. Doing so could be potentially dangerous if there is an officer, a security officer, or an intruder on-site.

The new policy does not affect the Police Department’s response to panic, robbery, duress, or other type of hold-up alarms. These types of alarms will continue to be treated as high priority by the Police Department.

Police Response

If your Alarm/Monitoring Company has verified your alarm in an acceptable manner, a Police Officer will be dispatched to your business or residence. It is likely that a verified alarm will be handled more quickly since it will be given a higher priority because it will be considered a crime in progress, rather than just another alarm.

If your Alarm/Monitoring company fails to verify your alarm appropriately, the Police Dispatcher will enter the call as a “Be-On-The-Lookout” and a Police Officer *may* respond at their discretion, and as time allows.

The Alarm Permit

All homeowners and business owners having an alarm system that draws public attention, whether or not it is monitored, are required to apply for an Alarm Permit. The Modesto Police Department sends Alarm Permit applications upon request via mail, fax, or electronic mail. The applications can also be downloaded from the City of Modesto website:

www.modestopolice.com

There is no fee for the alarm permit, however a \$200 charge will be assessed for alarm users who do not have a permit on file.