

# CITY OF OAKLAND



POLICE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING • 455 - 7TH STREET • OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94607-3985

Police Department

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## **TO ALL ALARM INSTALLATION AND MONITORING COMPANIES PROVIDING SERVICES WITHIN THE CITY OF OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA**

The Oakland City Council recently adopted a revised alarm ordinance, Municipal Code Chapter 8.02. The revised ordinance is intended to reduce the approximately 24,000 false alarm calls that the Oakland Police Department's Communication and Patrol Divisions handle yearly.

Consequently, the City of Oakland has entered into an agreement with ATB Services to assist in the administration of our alarm program. They were selected for their expertise in the area of false alarm reduction and for their customer service.

The quality of service that our Department provides to our citizens is important to us, as well as to the community. False alarm calls are one of the largest categories of calls for service that Oakland receives and thus, impact the level of service that the Department can provide our community.

We need your help to reduce the number of false alarm dispatches, while maintaining the crime deterrent effect of alarm systems. You are encouraged to cooperate with the Oakland Alarm Unit Coordinator and ATB Services by ensuring that all of your alarm customers within Oakland are registered. Your assistance is also requested to deal with "problem" alarm owners--those who have excessive false alarms. Their false alarm activations can be reduced by improving their alarm systems or providing them additional training.

ATB Services will be contacting you shortly to provide specific instructions on the operation of our False Alarm Reduction Program. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony W. Batts". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anthony W. Batts  
Chief of Police



To: All Alarm Installation and Monitoring Companies providing services in Oakland, California

From: Janie Morin, ATB Services  
Program Implementation Coordinator for Oakland, CA

Subject: Requirements of Alarm Installation and Monitoring Companies and coordinating to register Oakland, CA Alarm Users per the City of Oakland's Alarm Ordinance No. 12969

Date: December 04, 2009

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Thank you in advance for working with the Oakland Police Department and ATB Services to reduce false alarms in Oakland, CA.

The Oakland City Council approved a revised Burglar Alarm Ordinance that became effective in August 2009.

The City of Oakland entered into a contract with ATB Services to administer its Alarm Ordinance. The purpose of this memo is to introduce you to ATB Services, make you aware of the requirements of alarm installation and monitoring companies per the City of Oakland's Alarm Ordinance and to coordinate the alarm system registration.

Effective immediately, all alarm installation and monitoring companies are required to comply with the following requirements of the Oakland Alarm Ordinance:

1. Mandatory Enhanced Call Verification on all burglar dispatch requests by attempting to verify by telephone the validity of every alarm signal, except robbery and panic activations, before requesting law enforcement response to an alarm system signal. Monitoring companies must call at least two different phone numbers in an attempt to reach a responsible party prior to calling the police. This includes dispatch requests where the monitoring company has made contact with a party at the alarm site, who either does not have a password or the wrong one, the monitoring operator is still required to make the second call to verify the validity of the burglar alarm. Names and telephone numbers of those persons contacted or attempted to contact must be provided to ATB Services or the Police Department upon request.
2. Each Alarm Installation Company and Alarm Monitoring Company must designate one individual as the Alarm Response Manager (ARM) for the company. The individual designated as the ARM must be knowledgeable of the provisions of this ordinance, as well as have the knowledge and authority to deal with false alarm issues and respond to requests from the alarm administrator. The name, contact number, and email address of the ARM must be provided to the alarm administrator.



3. For best alarm reduction practices, install only SIA CP-01 standard equipment.
4. Alarm Installation Companies shall not program Alarm Systems so that they are capable of sending One Plus Duress Alarms.
5. Alarm Installation Companies shall not install a device to activate a Holdup Alarm, which is a single action, non-recessed button.
6. Security Alarm Business License – Every alarm business and alarm installation company shall obtain an Oakland Security Alarm Business License from the Police Department. **There is no fee to obtain this license. Only alarm businesses and installation companies in complete compliance with the provisions of this ordinance will be issued a license. This license only affects police response to alarm requests. It does not apply to your ability to sell, install, repair or monitor alarm systems. Enclosed is more detailed information on how to obtain this license.**
7. **For existing alarm systems**, which have been installed before the effective date of this chapter must be registered by their alarm business and permit fee collected within 30 days of receiving a notice from the Alarm Administrator. The Alarm Administrator will provide the alarm business a list of customers that have current permits with the City of Oakland. They will not be invoiced through their alarm business company until the next renewal is due. For all others that do not have a current permit, the alarm business is to invoice them for a registration accordingly and then submit the completed application and the collected permit fee for each of their alarm user customers. **Failure to comply and provide customer lists to the Alarm Administrator, as required, will result in suspension of their Oakland Security Alarm Business License.**
8. **Any fee required to be collected by an alarm company is considered a debt owed to the City if the company has failed to take reasonable steps to collect the fee. A company will have been deemed to have taken reasonable steps if at a minimum it bills the alarm user and waits 30 days and bills them a second time. The alarm company shall notify the City with the name and address of any alarm user refusing to pay any fee.**
9. **Alarm Permit fees are as follows:**
  - a. Annual Residential Permit Fee: \$25.00
  - b. Annual Commercial Permit Fee: \$35.00
  - c. Permit late fee: - \$30.00

**Please note: Senior waivers no longer apply**



10. **For new installations**, the Alarm Installation Company must review and deliver the new alarm owner a Customer False Alarm Prevention Checklist or similar form, as well as written operating instructions and guidelines on how to avoid False Alarms. Attached is a checklist sheet that can be used. The checklist shall satisfy the requirement to obtain written documentation from alarm users that they have been trained to operate the new system. (Ordinance section 8.02.050 (k) ) **A separate alarm permit is required for each alarm site having a distinct address or business name or has a separate alarm system within the same location.**

11. Alarm Installation Companies must also inform the City of Oakland's alarm administrator of any new installations within 30 days of installation and provide the name, address, billing address, and telephone number of the alarm user as well as any appropriate registration permit fee collected from the alarm user. **Failure to notify within thirty (30) days of installation results in a service fee of \$260.00 for installing and activating an unregistered alarm.**

12. We encourage monitoring companies to not provide an Alarm Notification to a burglar alarm signal, excluding Panic, Robbery, Duress and Holdup signals, during the first seven (7) days following installation of an Alarm System. Exceptions to the "acclimation period" of non-response can be made by the Chief in special circumstances, including but not limited to, domestic violence and stalking.

ATB Services shall receive address information in a Microsoft Excel format. Attached is the file layout. Please do not hesitate to contact us to coordinate existing alarm system registration. ATB Services is here to help and make this process as easy and efficient as possible.

Information provided in accordance with this requirement shall be treated as private and proprietary information and not made available to any person outside of the City of Oakland's Police Department or ATB Services.

Also, if you would like to execute a mutual non-disclosure agreement between our organizations, please contact our office to execute an agreement.

Thank you again for your cooperation in helping to reduce false alarms in the City of Oakland. Your involvement and commitment to the process are vital in helping to significantly reduce false alarms.

Janie Morin  
Program Implementation Coordinator  
800-861-5944 x101



**Enclosures:** City of Oakland's approved alarm owner permit application (for you to have each alarm customer fill out and submit with payment)

City of Oakland's approved brochure (for you to send to each alarm customer along with your invoice for their permit)

Customer False Alarm Checklist (for installers to have alarm owner fill out and keep on file)

Information on how to obtain Security Alarm Business License

Excel File Format for Existing and New Alarm System Registration (Only alarm customers located within the city limits of Oakland, CA shall be provided on this spreadsheet)

Information regarding who is exempt from paying the permit fee

## CUSTOMER FALSE ALARM PREVENTION CHECKLIST

- |     |     |  |
|-----|-----|--|
| Yes | No  |  |
| ___ | ___ | 1. I have been made aware of the applicable Alarm Ordinance and I will comply with its requirements. <b>YEARLY PERMIT REQUIRED</b>   |
| ___ | ___ | 2. I understand it is <b>my responsibility</b> to prevent false alarms, and I understand it is critical to assure that all users of the system (such as residents, employees, guests, cleaning people, and repair people) are trained on the proper use of the system and its operation.   |
| ___ | ___ | 3. I understand that my alarm installation company is to collect the permit fee and registration application. My alarm company will collect the annual permit fee.   |
| ___ | ___ | 4. I received training in the operation of the system, was provided an operating sheet and the security system operating manual.   |
| ___ | ___ | 5. I know what <b>Enhanced Call Verification</b> is and that it's required for burglar alarm dispatch requests.  |
| ___ | ___ | 6. I know how to test the system and contact the monitoring center.  |
| ___ | ___ | 7. I understand that my entry time is ___ and my exit time is ___.   |
| ___ | ___ | 8. I have the phone number for questions or repair service.  |
| ___ | ___ | 9. I know how to cancel accidental alarm activations and have the system cancellation code or code word.   |
| ___ | ___ | 10. I understand that indoor pets can cause false alarms and I will contact my alarm company if I acquire any additional indoor pets.  |
| ___ | ___ | 11. I understand that the main control panel and transformer are located in _____.   |
| ___ | ___ | 12. I have an alarm sheet, which describes how the alarm company will communicate with me in the event of various alarm signals.   |
| ___ | ___ | 13. I understand the importance of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ keeping my emergency contact information updated and I know how to do this;</li> <li>▪ immediately advising the alarm company if my phone number changes (including area code changes); and</li> <li>▪ immediately notify my alarm company of any changes to my telephone service such as call waiting, VoIP, DSL or a fax line.</li> </ul> |
| ___ | ___ | 14. I will advise the alarm company if I do any remodeling (such as painting, moving walls, doors or windows).   |
| ___ | ___ | 15. I understand that certain building defects (such as loose fitting doors or windows, rodents, inadequate power, and roof leaks) can cause false alarms. I will correct these defects as I become aware of them.   |
| ___ | ___ | 16. The alarm company has given me written false alarm prevention techniques to help me prevent false alarms.  |

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**ALARM COMPANY NAME**

**CUSTOMER**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Installer Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## FALSE ALARM REDUCTION PROGRAM SUMMARY ALARM SYSTEMS ORDINANCE NO. 12969, CHAPTER 8.02

False alarms cost the City of Oakland and its citizens thousands of dollars per year and can take officers away from actual emergencies. To prevent unnecessary emergency response to false alarms, an ordinance was adopted to encourage all alarm users to properly use their alarm system and maintain its mechanical reliability.

The Oakland City Council approved a revised alarm ordinance, which became effective August 2009. Chapter 8.02 was adopted and established alarm code requirements within the City.

Alarm users are required to register their alarm systems with the City of Oakland.

### Annual Permit Fee

- ▶ Residential - \$25
- ▶ Commercial - \$35
- ▶ Senior waivers no longer apply

### Permit Process

- ▶ **Current Valid Permit Holders**
  - If you paid your permit to the City of Oakland between 12/01/08 – 12/01/09 you will be notified by your alarm company prior to your renewal.
- ▶ **Existing Alarm Systems that have not paid a permit fee**
  - Your alarm company is required to register all their customers and collect the permit fee and renewal.
  - Please submit your application and permit fee to your alarm company.
- ▶ **New Alarm Installations**
  - Are to be registered by the installation alarm company.
  - The permit application and permit fee will be collected and forwarded to the City of Oakland.

### False Alarm Service Fees

- ▶ Each False Burglar Alarm Activation - \$84
- ▶ Each False Robbery or Panic Alarm Activation - \$156
- ▶ Cancellation of a burglar alarm response prior to an officer's arrival at the alarm site will not count as a false alarm and no service fee will be assessed.
- ▶ Do not call 9-1-1 to cancel your alarm, only your monitoring center can cancel the alarm dispatch request once made.
- ▶ Your right to appeal shall be provided if you are assessed a fee for which you believe an exception should be made.
- ▶ Appeal fee - \$25

For Information Contact:  
Alarm Tracking and Billing Services  
1-866-950-9902  
Fax 719-634-6325  
[www.atbservices.com/oakland](http://www.atbservices.com/oakland)



## FALSE ALARM REDUCTION PROGRAM SUMMARY ALARM SYSTEMS ORDINANCE NO. 12969, CHAPTER 8.02

A \$70 fee is charged if the alarm site does not have a valid permit for each police response, in addition to the Alarm Service Fee.

Prior to a burglar alarm dispatch, monitoring companies are required to comply with Enhanced Call Verification (ECV). ECV requires that your alarm company make at least two (2) separate calls, to two different numbers, in verifying your alarm systems activation signal prior to contacting the police. Contact your alarm company and update your emergency contact list. This does not apply to robbery, panic, fire or medical alarms.

### What Can You Do To Prevent False Alarms?

- Instruct all alarm users on the proper operation of your alarm system
- Secure all windows & doors before activation
- Know and rehearse the process to cancel an accidental alarm
- Notify your alarm company of any changes in responsible parties or problems with your system immediately
- Have your system checked annually by your alarm company

### Some Common Problems That Cause False Alarms:

- Weak alarm system backup batteries
- Open, unlocked, or loose fitting doors and windows
- Helium-filled balloons
- Wandering pets
- Improper application or installation of motion detectors
- Failure to properly train other users

### Alarm Administration Duties

They are to track and bill for an estimated 24,000 yearly false alarms; coordinate with approximately 120 alarm companies and monitoring centers in and out of State; process 20,000 annual permits; provide all the computer software and upgrades required; create online sites for City officials, alarm users and alarm companies to review their respective alarm information; handle all alarm suspensions and reinstatements; process all remittances paid; assist with the appeal filing; provide for online payment ability; accommodate alarm users with a toll-free customer service support; and develop an educational online alarm school to help reduce the number of false alarms that requires a police response. **When you purchase a private security alarm system or contract to have a private security system monitored by a security alarm business licensed by the City you are entering into a private contract with that business only. Your security alarm purchase and/or monitoring contract is not a contract with the City of Oakland, its Police Department or with any other law enforcement agency.**

For Information Contact:  
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# ALARM PERMIT APPLICATION

<input type="checkbox"/> RESIDENTIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> BUSINESS
Name of responsible party (Please print)	Business Name (Please print)
Alarm Location (Include Building/Apt #)	Name of responsible party (Please print)
City, State and Zip Code	Alarm Location (Include Suite or Unit #)
Billing Address (if different)	City, State and Zip Code
City, State and Zip Code	Billing Address (if different)
Home Phone: _____	City, State and Zip Code
Cell Phone: _____	Office Phone: _____
	Alternate Phone: _____

**SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

In order to ensure the safety of our officers, the public and to enable the police department to better protect your property, please provide information regarding potentially hazardous circumstances (i.e. guard animals, weapons, hazardous substances, etc.)

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

**ALARM INSTALLATION DETAILS**

Alarm Installation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Alarm Installation Company : \_\_\_\_\_

Monitoring Company: (if different) \_\_\_\_\_

Monitoring Company Address & Phone # : \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING AND SIGN**

This is to certify that as the applying principal, my immediate family, tenants, or employees who have access to the protected premises have been given training which includes procedures and practices to follow in the event that the alarm system is accidentally activated. I also acknowledge that the installation company left me a set of written instructions for the alarm system, including written guidelines on how to avoid false alarms. The police response may be influenced by factors including, but not limited to, the availability of officers, priority calls, traffic conditions, emergency conditions and staffing levels.

Signature: (Owner) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

In accordance with Oakland Municipal Code 8.02, if you have an alarm system within the city limits of Oakland, it must be registered with the city.  
Service Fees: False Burglar Alarm - \$84    False Robbery/Panic alarm - \$156    Non registered sites - Additional service fee of \$70 per false alarm  
Police response may be suspended for failure to pay a permit, renewal, or false alarm service fee.

**Make Checks Payable To Your Alarm Company**  
Annual Permit Fee:  
Residential Permit Fee: \$25.00  
Commercial Permit Fee: \$35.00

**Return this form and permit fee to your alarm company  
(Permit will not be valid without this form)**

For more information regarding this ordinance please visit [www.atbservices.com/oakland](http://www.atbservices.com/oakland)

**For Customer Service Call: 1-866-950-9902**

**For Office Use Only**  
Permit Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Processed By: \_\_\_\_\_

## **CITY OF OAKLAND SECURITY ALARM BUSINESS LICENSE**

1. DESIGNATE ONE INDIVIDUAL AS THE ALARM RESPONSE MANAGER (ARM) FOR YOUR COMPANY.
  - THEY MUST BE KNOWLEDGEABLE OF THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE.
  - THEY MUST HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE AND AUTHORITY TO DEAL WITH FALSE ALARM ISSUES AND RESPOND TO REQUESTS FROM THE ALARM ADMINISTRATOR.
  - PROVIDE THE NAME, CONTACT NUMBER AND EMAIL ADDRESS OF THE ARM TO THE ALARM ADMINISTRATOR.
  
2. PROVIDE A COPY OF YOUR VALID CITY OF OAKLAND BUSINESS PERMIT AND TAX LICENSE (**ONLY IF YOU SELL, INSTALL, REPAIR ALARM SYSTEMS OR HAVE DIRECT CONTRACT WITH ALARM OWNER**)
  
3. PROVIDE A VALID COPY OF YOUR COMPANY PERMIT ISSUED BY THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

UPON RECEIPT OF ALL OF THE ABOVE, THE OAKLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH A SECURITY ALARM BUSINESS LICENSE.

## Exempt Registration Criteria and Information

### Exempted –

1. All Public Agency/Government are exempted from paying the permit fee and renewal. This includes all public schools, city, county, state and federal agencies.
2. **Must** obtain a valid permit and renew it annually.

All exempted are subject to all other provisions of the Chapter.

A permit application is required for each exempt site and will be renewed annually on a calendar year.

### Ordinance Reference:

#### Exempt-Registration City of Oakland Master Fee Schedule

**8.02.020 (M) page 6** Permit fee rates are listed in the **City of Oakland Master Fee Schedule**. Under the Permit Fee (1) (c) for **Public Agency/Government** the fee is listed as **\$ 0.00**, they are exempted from paying a permit and renewal fee.

All **government entities** must obtain a permit and are **NOT** exempted from paying any non-compliance fee **8.20.040 (B) page 8**. They are subjected to all provisions, service fees, late fees, suspensions etc.