

To the Mayor and Members of the City Council**September 27, 2016**

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**SUBJECT: ALARM SYSTEMS AND PERMITTING**

Chapter 12 of the City Code addresses Emergency Reporting Equipment and Procedures, including the requirements for alarm systems and alarm system companies.

Alarm systems can be either monitored or unmonitored. Unmonitored systems will not automatically summon a police response. Monitored alarm systems can provide either direct or indirect reporting to the Police Department. Direct alarm notification is only permitted for government entities and financial institutions. Residential and typical commercial alarm systems provide indirect alarm reporting to the Police Department, meaning that the notification goes through an alarm company prior to notifying the Police Department of activity indicative of criminal behavior. Property owners that install a monitored alarm system and wish to have a police response to an alarm activation must have an alarm permit issued by the Planning and Development Department. An alarm permit is valid for one year and has an annual cost of \$50.00.

A property owner is responsible for keeping an alarm system in good working order and to minimize false alarms. Alarm monitoring companies are responsible for attempting to verify alarm signals prior to notifying the Police Department and for providing the alarm permit number and alarm site address to the Police Department.

False alarms have a negative impact on public safety because they divert resources unnecessarily and first responder personnel responding to false alarms are consequently not available to respond to actual emergencies. Alarm permit holders are assessed a fee for all false alarms in excess of three in a 12-month period on a sliding scale. Alarm permits may be revoked if a property owner has more than eight false alarms in a year.

If you have any questions about this topic, please contact Randle Harwood, Planning and Development Director, at 817-392-6101.

David Cooke
City Manager