HOW THE ORDINANCE WORKS

All monitored alarm systems must be registered. Permit registration forms are available from the alarm company or the West Melbourne Police Department. The initial registration fee is $25.00. You must renew your permit every year, however if you have no alarms between 10/1 and 9/30 of the previous year the renewal fee will be waived. The user of a non-permitted alarm system will be fined $20.00 in addition to the registration fee of $25.00 plus any applicable false alarm fees. If fines/fees remain unpaid, you will be notified to take corrective action or the police will suspend response to general intrusion calls from your alarm system.

When you register your alarm system, you will be asked to provide the names and phone numbers of two people who can secure your premises if you are unavailable and Police find a problem at your alarm site.

The City of West Melbourne would prefer that every alarm user had zero false alarms; however we realize that accidents happen, so the ordinance provides for two "free" false alarms in a 12 month period. At false alarm number four, the ordinance requires that the alarm user have a licensed alarm company service the alarm system and /or retrain the system users.

If the problem continues, the Alarm Administrator may require a system review involving the alarm user and the alarm company to review the circumstances of each false alarm, identify the cause, and implement a course of corrective action. After 6 false alarms you will be notified to take corrective action or the police will suspend response to general intrusion calls from your alarm system.

You can appeal the assessment of a fee, fine, permit suspension or the determination of a false alarm to the Alarm Administrator.

FEES AND FINES

Below are fees billable to alarm users for response to alarms. Remember, fees apply ONLY if police are dispatched, arrive on the scene and the alarm is false.

Fines for Response to Monitored Alarm Systems:

1	$0
2	$0
3	$50
4	$100
5	$150
6 or more	$200 each

Other fines and fees:

Initial permit registration	$25.00
Renewal of registration*	$25.00
Non-permitted system fine (If not permitted within 30 days of notice)	$20.00
Failure to submit repair report	$100.00
Master Permit Fee (For Apartment Complexes Where monitored alarms are offered as an amenity)	$200.00
plus per unit fee	$5.00

*If you are "false alarm free" from 10-1 to 9-30 of the previous year, the fee is waived.

This brochure contains a brief summary of the City of West Melbourne alarm ordinance, Chapter 18, Article VI. The full document is available for reference at the West Melbourne Police Department, West Melbourne City Hall, and online at www.westmelbourne.org under city codes.

V5.2011

City of West Melbourne Alarm Ordinance Information

West Melbourne Police Department
Alarm Administrator
2290 Minton Rd
West Melbourne, FL 32904
Phone: (321)723-9673, ext.755
Fax: (321)925-2857
E-mail: alarms@westmelbournepolice.org

Linda Wilson
Alarm Administrator

PURPOSE OF THE ORDINANCE

The ordinance was adopted to deal with the growing problem of false alarms. This increase has caused concern for citizen, police and firefighter safety. It has reduced the ability for public safety officials to respond to true emergencies and diverted police officers from crime prevention efforts. The ordinance allows for the issuance of permits, establishes fees and fines, provides penalties for violations, establishes an education program and sets conditions for suspension of police response to alarms.

WHAT IS A FALSE ALARM?

The ordinance defines a false alarm as: "the activation of any alarm system that results in a response by a member of the Police department where no evidence of a problem requiring their response is found after an investigation at the alarm site. An alarm dispatch request cancelled by the alarm company prior to the time the responding police officer reaches the alarm site shall not be considered a false alarm dispatch.

ALARM ADMINISTRATOR

The Alarm Administrator was created to administer the City's alarm ordinance. Its main function is to work with alarm companies and alarm users to reduce false alarms. Please contact us at 321-723-9673 (ext 755) if you have any questions about the ordinance or how to prevent false alarms.

CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY FOR EXTRA FEES OR FINES?

USE THESE TIPS TO PREVENT FALSE ALARMS

♦ Register your system on time.

♦ Know the procedures your alarm company wants you to use to cancel a false alarm.

♦ Make sure that anyone who has a key to your premises is fully trained to use the system (children, employees, neighbors, caretakers, domestic or cleaning crews, delivery personnel, realtors and all temporary staff), this means that they know how to arm and disarm the system.

♦ CLOSE and LOCK your doors and windows BEFORE activating your alarm. This reduces the chance that the alarm will activate if friends, neighbors or customers enter or if wind blows a door or window open. Unlocked doors are the main cause of false alarms.

♦ Restrict your pets to areas without motion detectors. Pets often jump or climb into the view of motion detector sensors. Consider whether you want a motion detector if your pets have free run of the house when the alarm is on.

♦ Check your systems batteries. If the batteries don't work properly, neither will your system. Batteries should be replaced every 3-4 years.

♦ Know that motion detectors can be activated by drafts from fans and air conditioners which cause movement of helium balloons, decorations or curtains. Move these items away from drafts or secure them.

YOUR ALARM COMPANY'S RESPONSIBILITIES

In an effort to reduce false alarms, your alarm company is required by the ordinance to take certain measures:

1. Your monitoring company must attempt to verify alarms by contacting the alarm site before requesting police dispatch. This is also a state law. Fla. Stat. § 489.529.

2. If your monitoring company determines during verification that the alarm is false, they must attempt to cancel police dispatch. For your safety, the police will not accept a cancellation from you.

3. When you have an alarm system installed, or you take over an existing one, your alarm company must provide you with a permit registration form, and an installation checklist that:

   ♦ verifies that you have been trained on the system

   ♦ ensures that you know how to contact your alarm company

   ♦ verifies that you know how to cancel a false alarm

   ♦ explains your responsibilities for permit renewal