

BLOCK WATCH



False Alarms Billing

So, you've installed an alarm system. That's great! Now you can have some added peace of mind about your security of property and person. If you take the extra time to set up your system to avoid false alarms, you can also avoid future hassles and fines.



False Alarms are a Drain on Resources

A false alarm is defined as the “direct or indirect notification of police and their actual attendance at the address of the alarm where there is no evidence of a crime or emergency situation in relation to the property.”

False alarms are a significant drain on resources: 59% of residential alarm calls and 87% of commercial calls are later deemed false. You can be fined for any alarm that is perceptible outside your property. It may have been falsely reported by your alarm company, a neighbour or passerby. Billing may be incurred if emergency vehicles are responding to testing, mechanical failure, user error, or even as a result of power failures.

Fees

Surrey [Security & Fire By-law 1997, No. 13168](#) establishes fees for Police Force or Fire Department responses to false alarms:

- Within 14 days of the date of the invoice - \$97.00
- After 14 days of the date of the invoice - \$123.00

Preventing a False Alarm Fine

- Ensure you have a “Verified Response” alarm, which means your alarm company will try to call you first to verify the incident. This typically increases the urgency with which the police are dispatched.
- Provide your alarm company with a current phone number for yourself and that of a representative in case you cannot answer the call or quickly attend your property.
- In order to be compliant with the Surrey Noise By-law, your alarm must not sound for more than five minutes after activation. This will also limit drawing police calls from neighbours.



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- Motion and sound activated alarms should be calibrated by a professional. Provide them with information such as your pets, neighbourhood noises and how people access your property.
- Practice using the alarm to familiarize residents with the shut-off code and how to use the system.
- Check batteries and/or battery back-up for wired alarm systems to ensure it will stay on during storms.

Appealing Your Invoice

If you believe you have grounds to appeal your False Alarm invoice, visit www.surrey.ca/city-services/16005.aspx to view the Notice of Appeal form. This is also where you'll get up-to-date fee and By-law information, as well as tips for avoiding false alarms resulting in responses from Fire Services. If you believe your alarm was legitimate and you need your False Alarm police file number and the name of the police officer who attended, please call the Surrey RCMP Records Enquiry Line at 604-599-7798 to obtain that information.



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