



**False Alarm Reduction Unit**  
**Public Safety Center, 725 N Cherry Street**  
**Mailing: PO Box 1707, Winston-Salem NC 27102**  
**Tel (336)-773-7886; Fax (336)-773-7884; [www.wspd.org](http://www.wspd.org)**

[ANNEXATION 2006](#)  
Alarm owners whose property  
was annexed effective September  
30, 2006 have until March 31,  
2007 to obtain Alarm Permits  
from the City of Winston-Salem  
False Alarm Reduction Unit.  
The City will not assess civil  
penalties during the six-month  
grace period.

**Alarm Permit Application** = All alarm systems must be registered with the City. This includes residential alarms and business alarms (monitored and non-monitored alarms). There is no fee to register. **However, if Police or Fire responds to a “false” alarm at an unregistered alarm, there is a \$100 civil penalty (failure to register).**

Police and Fire expend valuable resources responding to “false” alarms. In an effort to recover a portion of the costs, the City Council enacted a Police and a Fire Alarm Ordinance in December 2002. The Ordinances became effective April 1, 2003.

**Civil Penalties: Unregistered alarm \$100: Police or Fire respond to a “false” alarm at an unregistered alarm site.**

The Police and Fire Alarm Ordinances each allow 3-false alarms at registered alarm sites during a 12-month tracking. A 12-month tracking begins with the “first false alarm” response. False police and fire alarms track separately.

**Additional civil penalties:** 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> false alarms = \$50 each; 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> = \$100 each; 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> = \$250 each; 10+ = \$500 each.

Nine (9) false burglar alarms in a 12-month tracking require the alarm site placed on “No Police response to burglar alarms only.”

**POLICE ALWAYS RESPOND TO HOLDUP AND PANIC ALARMS.**

Reinstate Police response to burglar alarms: (1.) Contact the FARU; (2.) Schedule an alarm system inspection by a licensed alarm technician and fax or mail a copy of the inspection to the False Alarm Reduction Unit; (3.) Pay all civil penalties associated with the false alarm violations. For registered alarm sites: If the reinstatement date is *after* the 12-month tracking, the false alarm count resets to zero. If the reinstatement date is *within* the 12-month tracking, the false alarm count does not reset to zero. Therefore, 10+ false alarms in a 12-month tracking incur a civil penalty of \$500 each. In addition, if the 10<sup>th</sup> false burglar alarm occurs during the 12-month tracking, the burglar alarm site is again placed on “No Police Response to Burglar Alarms only.” Reinstatement requirements apply.

Return the completed application to the False Alarm Reduction Unit (FARU) by fax or mail. Keep the top portion of the application for reference. Each alarm system requires an Alarm Permit. Dual Burglar/Fire alarm systems require only one Alarm Permit. Alarm site information is entered into CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch), generating an Alarm Permit to the mailing address you indicate on the application. The Alarm Permit is a bright yellow postcard. Your Alarm Permit number will be on the mailing label. Keep your Alarm Permit for your records. Contact the FARU if you do not receive your Alarm Permit within three weeks of submitting an application.

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**ALARM PERMIT (print or type)**

Residence or Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home# \_\_\_\_\_

Work# \_\_\_\_\_ Cell# \_\_\_\_\_ Pager# \_\_\_\_\_

Address (include Apt/Suite/Unit) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address (if different) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you the new owner of the alarm property?  Yes  No If yes, deed / effective date: \_\_\_\_\_

Delete an ALARM PERMIT from your previously registered alarm site? Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Alarm Company \_\_\_\_\_ Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Monitoring Co \_\_\_\_\_ Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Monitoring Co (if different) \_\_\_\_\_ Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Provide two key holders (yourself or others) to respond to the alarm site within 30-minutes. Monitored alarms: Your monitoring service contacts Police / Fire for response. Non-monitored audible alarms can be detected by neighbors or patrolling officers who generate Police / Fire response. Inform your monitoring company and key holders if you are scheduled to be out of town and provide additional key holders during your absence.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/Pager \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/Pager \_\_\_\_\_

### **IMPORTANT:**

- Key holders should respond within 30-minutes to all alarm activations to assist Police/Fire with entry into the alarm premises.
- Update key holders and telephone numbers with your alarm monitoring company and the False Alarm Reduction Unit.
- **ALARM PERMITS ARE NOT TRANSFERABLE.** If ownership of an alarm system transfers through sale of the property, etc., notify the FARU within 10-business days. Submit an Alarm Permit Application to the False Alarm Reduction Unit within 10-business days of alarm installation date or acquisition of alarm property.
- An alarm owner may not install, maintain, or use an audible alarm system which sounds for more than 20-minutes. This does not apply to fire alarms.
- **The FARU must receive a written appeal for a review of a false alarm ruling within 10-business days.** A written appeal shall include the following information: Alarm user name; Alarm location address; Date and time of the false alarm; Alarm permit number; and Documentation the alarm was not false.
- **THERE IS NO APPEAL FOR NON-REGISTRATION (NO ALARM PERMIT).** **Alarm Permit Applications must be submitted within 10-business days of alarm system installation / ownership.** Awareness of alarm regulation is **best** communicated by your alarm company. If you were **not** aware of alarm regulation, contact your alarm company to inquire about their notification practices. Alarm regulation prevails across the United States. The City informed the NC Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (NCBFAA) of the date of regulation. The City invited Alarm industry representatives to public forum meetings regarding assistance in notifying their customers. The City did not have direct mail option to alarm owners because of the alarm industry's reluctance to release their mailing lists. Therefore, the City provided Alarm Permit Application forms, envelopes, and paid postage to help facilitate notification. The City conducted an awareness campaign for the Alarm Ordinances for an eight-month grace period before enforcement. During the grace period, there were no civil penalties assessed for non-registration and excessive false alarms. Marketing was accomplished by contact with the alarm industry; ads in The Journal and The Chronicle; Billboards throughout the City; TV-13 Bulletin Board; 30+ public broadcasts on TV-13's "Behind the Badge" segments; and Inserts in utility bills.
- The City continues awareness via the Journal, The Chronicle, Que Pasa, TV-13's Bulletin Board, [www.cityofws.org](http://www.cityofws.org) & [www.wspd.org](http://www.wspd.org)

### **PREVENT FALSE ALARMS:**

- Instruct alarm users / key holders on proper operation of the alarm system to include arming and disarming the system, and how to cancel "false" burglar alarm activations via the alarm monitoring company before police arrive.
- An arming delay of at least 60 seconds is recommended.
- Properly secure all doors and windows before arming the system. Unsecured doors and windows may result in false alarms.
- Review with your monitoring service the procedures for police/fire dispatch. Most alarm companies make a one-call verification to the alarm premises to verify if a **burglar** alarm activation is valid, asking personnel on site for a password. Some monitoring companies allows a two-call verification on burglar alarm activations, i.e., call the residence or business and then call a cell phone before requesting dispatch.
- Ensure motion sensors are adjusted correctly, especially if you have pets or install ceiling fans. Contact your alarm company BEFORE you schedule modifications to an existing alarm site installation..
- If your alarm system activates during thunderstorms or power outages, schedule an inspection by your alarm company. A yearly inspection of the alarm system is recommended. Alarm systems have a secondary power source which is usually a battery. An adequate battery should prevent alarm activation due to minor power interruptions.
- Determine the cause of all alarm activations. If you cannot identify why the alarm activated, schedule an immediate inspection to determine if the alarm system is malfunctioning.

Revised March 6, 2008