



Consumer Protection and the Alarm User – After you Buy

Now that you have purchased an alarm system, what can you do if you have a problem with false alarms, your alarm system, or your alarm company? Don't despair; there are tried and true methods you can employ, which can help you resolve the issues at hand.

Problems with False Alarms

- Most false alarms are classified as "user error," whether due to unfamiliarity with the alarm system, lack of adequate training, or outside influences such as neighbors, cleaning staff, delivery personnel, construction workers, etc.
- In order to avoid potential costly fees/fines for false alarms, be absolutely sure that every person who has keys to your facility knows how to properly operate the system, knows how to cancel a false alarm call and has their own pass code.
- Training, training, training! If you are not completely comfortable with the operation of your alarm system, contact your alarm company and request additional training for you and every other person, who has keys to your facility.
- Since the installation of your alarm system, have you acquired a new pet, remodeled, moved furniture or changed your physical environment in any way? If so, you must contact your alarm company, as the system may not have been designed to accommodate your new surroundings.

Problems with Alarm System

- Always contact your alarm company first.
- It is important to know what your warranty rights are, so read your contract carefully to avoid any misunderstandings or unexpected costs.
- Give your alarm company an opportunity to correct the problem and make yourself available for service calls and/or retraining meetings.
- If you run into difficulty in getting your system serviced, put your concerns in writing, giving enough detail so that your alarm company can easily discern the steps they need to take to assist you; i.e., send a technician, retrain on the proper operation of the system, clarify issues, etc.
- If all else fails, contact your local Consumer Protection Office or state Attorney General's Office for assistance.

Problems with Alarm Company

- Once again, try to work out your differences directly with your alarm company. They want a happy customer and you want to be a satisfied consumer.
- Deal with facts, not emotions! The more succinct you can be with the nature of your problem, the easier it will be for your alarm company to satisfy you.
- Don't be afraid to go directly to the top! If you are not satisfied with your salesperson, technician or customer service representative, ask to speak with a manager, owner or president.

Consider purchasing a maintenance contract so that your alarm system can be serviced annually to keep it in tip-top shape. You would not go 5 years without performing regular maintenance on your automobile – things like changing the oil, turning the rotors, checking and replacing belts and hoses – and expect that

you will have no problems. Alarm systems are no different and also require regular maintenance – checking the battery, cleaning motion sensors, replacing door and/or window contacts and testing the overall operation of the equipment. Regular maintenance of your alarm system will help alleviate costly false alarms and can extend the life of your alarm system.

