



Baltimore County
Alarm Reduction Section
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How Can I Reduce False Alarms? There are several successful false alarm

reduction techniques that have been proven to reduce the likelihood of false alarms.

- **Train all Users:** Educate all alarm system users on the proper use of the alarm system.
- **Fix Any Problems:** Schedule a service call if the alarm is not working properly.
- **Use ECV – Enhanced Call Verification:** ECV is an alarm monitoring procedure requiring that a minimum of two calls be made to two different alarm user telephone numbers prior to requesting public safety dispatch. Typically, one of the phone numbers is the alarm user's cell phone.
- **Update your Contact Info:** Make sure the contact numbers on file with your alarm company are always up to date. Be proactive and add your alarm company's phone number to your cell phone contact list.
- **If You Give Them A Key – Give Them the Codes:** To avoid false alarms, ensure that persons with access to your location (Scheduled workers, Maintenance, Cleaners/Cleaning Crews, House or Pet Sitters & Landscapers) have the proper temporary codes and passwords for your alarm system.
- **Cross Zone:** This is an alarm monitoring technique that requires more than one zone in your burglar alarm system to fault or trip before public safety is notified. For example, a perimeter and an interior motion alarm would both have to trip within a specified period of time in order to summon public safety. In this situation, if an interior motion trips but the perimeter does not, the alarm company will not request a public safety dispatch.
- **Take Care With Pets:** Talk to your alarm company about installing pet friendly devices or changing your system design to accommodate pets.
- **Check On Any Displays:** Always ensure that hanging or moving decorations will not activate motion detectors, especially when heating systems come on.
- **Take Care When Rearranging:** Before rearranging your furniture or putting up the new spring curtains or drapes, first determine whether the design change would interfere with the operation of your motion detectors.
- **Check Before Remodeling:** Always contact your alarm company prior to starting any remodeling project. You need to work with your alarm company to make sure the remodeling process does not cause false alarms and that your system will continue to work properly after the work is completed.
- **Check Your Batteries:** Like all batteries, your backup has a useful life of about 3 to 5 years, but that life may be shortened if you have had several power outages. Your system battery should be checked annually, or after any storm related false alarm, by an alarm technician and replaced when needed.

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- **Follow the ANSI/SIA Control Panel Standard (CP-01):** CP-01 is a standard that addresses the settings on control panels to avoid the most common cause of false alarms; user error. Alarm users should ask their alarm companies to use panels that comply with CP-01.
- **Use Video or Audio Verification:** When utilized in an electronic security application, it allows the monitoring center to either “hear” or “see” into the protected premise to determine if an intruder is present.
- **Visit www.alarmuser.org** - the False Alarm Reduction Association has a series of fact sheets that provide additional useful information