



MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

280 - Alarms

GENERAL ORDER: 2007-09

ISSUED: May 16, 2007

EFFECTIVE: May 16, 2007

ACTION: Amends General Order 2006-24 (July 26, 2006)

280.00 PURPOSE

The purpose of these procedures is to provide members with instructions related to alarms. Due to the overwhelming number of false alarms, the Milwaukee Police Department will not routinely respond to alarms unless additional information is received to verify the validity of the alarm.

280.05 GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. The Milwaukee Police Department generally responds only to verified burglar alarms. An alarm is considered "verified" under the following circumstances:

1. When verified at the premise by the alarm company or their representative.
2. When verified at the premise by the property owner or other responsible person.
- 3. When verified by readily reproducible video.

a. Alarm service providers must describe to the Police Telecommunicator what they observed on video that verifies the validity of the alarm. Additionally, a recording of the verifying video must be turned over to the Milwaukee Police Department within 24 hours.

b. Alarm verifying video shall be submitted as an e-mail attachment to VerifiedAlarms@Milwaukee.gov. Such video files must be in a standard format that can be viewed using "Windows Media Player" version 9. Proprietary file formats and/or CODECs will not be acceptable.

c. Although a police response will be sent, a key holder/verifying person is still required to respond.

- 4. When verified by multiple device trips.
- a. Multiple device trips are a succession of trips of at least three contiguous detection devices, or a perimeter trip with at least one interior trip, within ten minutes. These indicate that someone is moving through the building. Whenever at least three contiguous devices have been tripped, a perimeter trip is not required because an actor may have concealed himself or herself in the building during open hours.
 - b. Callers representing an alarm service provider must identify the areas of the devices tripped, in the order they were tripped. This information is to be documented in the CAD record. Additionally, verification of multiple device trips must be turned over to the Milwaukee Police Department within 24 hours.
 - c. Multiple device trip verification shall be submitted as an e-mail attachment to VerifiedAlarms@Milwaukee.gov. Such verification must be in the form of an Adobe Reader PDF file. Other file formats and/or CODECs will not be acceptable. Verifying files must contain at least the following information:
 - i. Site address
 - ii. Date
 - iii. Zone area of each device tripped
 - iv. Time each device was tripped
 - d. Note that some alarm service providers do not receive an alarm signal until more than one device has been tripped, which they then receive as a single alarm trip. This does not change the requirement of at least three contiguous device trips, or a perimeter trip with at least one interior trip, within ten minutes. In all such cases it is the responsibility of the alarm service provider to ensure that the multiple devices actually tripped are properly identified in the verifying PDF file.
 - e. Although a police response will be sent, a key holder/verifying person is still required to respond.

Upon receipt of a verified alarm, the Technical Communications Division shall immediately enter the information into the Computer Aided Dispatch System for police response.

- B. The person calling in the alarm to the Milwaukee Police Department shall be instructed that the verifying person(s) must remain in a safe location at or near the scene until officers have responded in order to aid in the investigation of the alarm.
- C. Documentation provided in support of video or multiple device verification shall remain confidential. The Milwaukee Police Department will not release any such documentation outside our Department except as required for lawful prosecution. All other requests must be directed to the submitting alarm service provider.
- D. In general the Milwaukee Police Department does not respond to non-verified burglar alarms (those that do not meet the requirements of Section A above). The Milwaukee Police Department does, however, respond to non-verified alarms under the following circumstances:
 - 1. Alarms received through the Fire Burglar Instrument (FBI) located in the Technical Communications Division
 - 2. Alarms received on government buildings/installations
 - 3. VARDA burglar alarms

280.10 UNLICENSED ALARM COMPANIES

The Department shall not respond to burglar alarms from unlicensed alarm companies.

280.15 UNLAWFUL ALARMS

The Department shall not respond to unlawful alarms as specified in the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances, Section 105-75 (5) (b). "No alarm system may be operated or programmed to initiate, transmit, or deliver by automatic means, to any city agency, an alarm notification, described as panic, disturbance, police alert, medical emergency, or other miscellaneous incidents distinguished from the specific burglary, robbery, or fire alarms."

280.20 OFFICER RESPONSE

Officers responding to alarms shall ensure that points of entry are checked and that there is no evidence of burglary, attempted burglary, robbery, attempted robbery or fire.

280.25 C CODE DISPOSITIONS

Officers investigating alarms shall be responsible for the transmission of the appropriate "C Code" disposition to the dispatcher upon completion. Acceptable C Code dispositions for alarms are:

- A. C-1 or C-2 Arrest
- B. C-8 Report Filed
- C. C-19 False Alarm
- D. C-19W False Alarm – Weather Related

280.30 FALSE ALARM SIGNALS**A. FALSE ALARMS DEFINED**

False alarm means an alarm notification summoning the fire or police department to the location of an alarm activation, when the responding officer finds no evidence of the crimes of burglary, robbery, attempted robbery or fire. False alarm does not include an alarm activation signal caused by extraordinary extremes of weather such as high winds, thunder and lightning storms or other systematic electric disturbances. (City Ord. 105-75 2. g.)

B. INTENTIONAL FALSE ALARM ACTIVATIONS

Disposition Code "C-19" is also to be used if the responding officer(s) determine that the alarm was intentionally signaled by a person at the premises in order to summon police and/or fire response for matters other than burglary, attempted burglary, robbery, attempted robbery or fire. Such intentional but inappropriate alarm activities include, but are not limited to, fights, disorderly patrons, shoplifters, thefts, unanticipated tests of equipment, etc. In these cases, the reason for the activation is to be provided to the dispatcher at the time the C -19 disposition code is given.

- C. When an officer has determined an alarm signal to be a "false alarm", he or she shall complete the necessary information on the *False Alarm Notification* (Form PF-14) and give it to the owner or occupant of the alarmed premises if at the scene of a false alarm. If the owner or occupant is not at the scene, the PF-14 shall be placed in any receptacle that is located near the main entrance of the residence or business. **This form shall not be placed in a location that leaves it exposed to public view.**

D. C-19 FALSE ALARM DISPOSITIONS

1. No Burglary, Robbery or Fire

Disposition Code C-19 shall be used in cases in which no evidence of burglary, attempted burglary, robbery, attempted robbery, or fire is discovered after the involved premises has been checked.

2. Weather Extremes or Electric Disturbance

Disposition Code C-19W shall be used for "false alarms" that have been caused by extremes of weather conditions or systemic electrical disturbances. These dispositions shall include the nature of the suspected problem at the time the C-19W Code is given to the dispatcher. (These will **not** be tallied against the premise's "excessive alarm" limit, and it is therefore essential that this mitigating information be provided.)

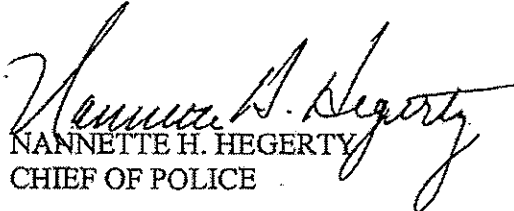
E. CITATION ISSUANCE

1. Recording False Alarms

The Technical Communications Division shall be responsible for records relating to the enforcement of the False Alarm Ordinance. C-19 False Alarm Disposition Codes shall be tallied by this Division for all locations that notify the Department of alarm signals.

2. The Technical Communications Division shall be responsible for the issuance of municipal citations to alarm users for the **third** and any subsequent false alarms that occur within a calendar year.

3. The Technical Communications Division shall be responsible for the issuance of municipal citations to unlicensed alarm companies and companies that transmit prohibited alarms.


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CHIEF OF POLICE