

The Stockton Fire Department's False Alarm reduction program was established to reduce false alarms within the city. The Stockton Fire Department works with both alarm owners and alarm companies to provide continuous education about the City's False Alarm Ordinance and the need to eliminate false alarms. The Stockton Municipal Code requires:

- That all required fire alarms receive certification from an approved nationally recognized test laboratory that indicates that the system has been installed in accordance within the approved plans and specifications and meets minimum NFPA standards. A copy of the certificate must be provided to the Fire Chief at no cost.
- It is unlawful for any property owner or licensed contractor to fail to notify the Fire Department Emergency Communications Division prior to any test, installation, repair, modification, addition, or maintenance of any fire alarm or fire extinguishing system which could result in the transmission of a false alarm.
- The Fire Department may charge fees that reasonably constitute the cost to the city for response to false alarms when it is determined that the false alarm is malicious, results from a failure to maintain the system or failure to properly notify the fire department that the system is being tested or worked on.
- The fire department will bill the responsible party for the third and any subsequent false alarm responses during any twelve (12) month period.

**This brochure is presented as a public service by the Stockton Fire Department with the concurrence and approval from the Central Valley Fire Alarm Association.**

**For more information concerning fire alarm certification or false alarm reduction call your fire alarm monitoring company or the Stockton Fire Department's Fire Prevention Division at 937-8448**

---

**The Stockton Fire Department proudly provides the following services:**

- 911 Emergency response
- Fire Suppression and Rescue
- Paramedic Service
- Water Rescue
- Hazardous Material Response
- Confined Space Rescue
- Heavy rescue
- Mercantile Inspections
- Plan Checks
- Arson Investigation
- Weed Abatement
- Public Education
- Disaster Preparedness and much more...



# FALSE FIRE ALARMS

- Risk Traffic Accidents
- Take Firefighters Away From Real Emergencies
- Cost You Money!



# Seven ways *You* Can Prevent False Alarms

- 1. Notify your alarm company before testing or repairing the system.** It sounds obvious, but sometimes people forget to make that call. Some cities want you to notify the fire department as well as your alarm company.
- 2. Know how to cancel a false alarm.** If your fire alarm goes off, and you are *absolutely certain* you know what caused the alarm, notify your alarm company immediately. Have your alarm company's phone number handy. If there's any doubt as to whether there really is a fire, don't take chances—let the fire department check it out!
- 3. Dust and smoke detectors don't get along.** Dust looks just like smoke to a smoke detector. If you are spray painting, sanding floors, installing new drywall, or doing anything else that produces visible dust, there's a good chance that you'll set off a smoke detector. Check with your alarm company before doing anything which will produce dust. **TIP:** Use your vacuum cleaner to clean your smoke detectors monthly. Even ordinary household dust can build up over time and cause false alarms.
- 4. Fire alarm systems need regular testing and maintenance.** You expect your fire alarm system to work when it's needed, and not to cause false alarms. The only way to make that happen is to have your system tested and maintained by a trained technician. See the "Testing and Maintenance" section of this brochure for more information.
- 5. Deal only with qualified, licensed professionals.** California state law requires any company which works on fire alarm systems to hold a C-10 electrical contractor's license. Your contractor's license number must appear on all contracts, advertising, and business cards. You can verify the status of a California contractor's license by calling the Contractors State License Board at (800) 321-CSLB. The Stockton Fire Department Fire Prevention Division can refer you to a qualified fire alarm company in your area—see the back of this brochure.
- 6. Fire alarm equipment must be installed properly.** Smoke detectors don't belong in kitchens, garages, attics, or outside bathrooms with showers. Heat detectors can be used to protect these areas without false alarms.
- 7. Treat your system with care.** Wiring and detection devices can be accidentally damaged, and false alarms can result. Notify your alarm company of any damage, and never attempt to repair the system yourself.

## Testing and Maintenance

your fire alarm system sits there quietly, day after day. You don't have to turn it on or off. You expect it to work 24 hours a day, whenever it's needed. Regular testing and maintenance is essential!

## Residential Fire Alarm Systems

The fire alarm system in your home should be tested at least once a month, or as required by the manufacturer. Ask your alarm service company for testing instructions, and notify the monitoring center prior to testing. The National Fire Alarm Code requires that every residential fire alarm system be tested at least every three years by a qualified service technician. The control panel's standby batteries will also need to be replaced, usually every three to five years.

## Commercial Fire Alarm Systems

The National Fire Alarm Code requires regular testing and maintenance of all fire alarm systems. You should have this done by a qualified fire alarm company under a written contract. At the very least, this will involve a thorough test of your system once a year. Some devices, such as sprinkler alarm devices, require quarterly testing. Smoke detectors also require periodic sensitivity tests to confirm proper operation.