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False Alarm Update: Milwaukee Makes Hiring Guards Mandatory for Alarm Companies

Apr 13, 2005, MILWAUKEE -- Milwaukee' s legislative body has unanimously approved a measure that forces alarm companies to send trained security guards to check on burglar alarms before police respond. The Milwaukee Common Council voted 14-0 for the change, which is considered an offshoot of the verified response put into effect by Milwaukee Police Chief Nannette Hegerty.

Under that policy, put into effect [last September](#), an alarm company must have a burglar alarm verified before police will respond.

According to the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, alarm companies argued before the council that a requirement to hire security guards would increase their costs, which they would have to pass on to customers.

Ald. Tony Zielinski, an opponent of the new alarm policy, attempted to add language to the bill that would put the council on record in favor of sending police instead of guards. However, his amendment was voted down 10-4.

In other false alarm news ...

LOS ANGELES: A report by the Los Angeles Police Commission shows there has been **no change** in the percentage of false alarm calls police respond to since a revamped burglar alarm policy designed to prevent false alarms began at the start of 2004. However, there has been a reduction in the total number of alarms police respond to.

According to the *Daily Breeze*, the report says 97 percent of the alarm calls LAPD officers responded to in 2004 were false — no change from the 97 percent they responded to in 2003.

Los Angeles police [started a temporary policy on Jan. 1, 2004](#) where officers no longer responded to burglar alarm calls at addresses with more than two false alarms in a year unless they were verified by someone at that location. That policy was [made permanent by the Los Angeles City Council last September](#) and a

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\$115 fine for a first false alarm was added. The report says, however, that the number of alarms police responded to overall went down from 9,000 per month in 2003 to 6,000 per month in 2004. The total number of alarm calls that police responded to dropped from 109,295 calls in 2003 to 79,882 in 2004.

SIMI VALLEY, Calif.: A proposal by the police department of Simi Valley, Calif., to institute verified response was the subject of a March 30 community meeting held to discuss false burglar alarms. According to the *Ventura County Star*, Simi Valley Police Chief Mark Layhew told those gathered that Simi Valley' s version of a verified response policy is a "living document" and will incorporate community concerns by the time it is presented before the city' s council on May 2. Mayhew said that as it stands now, the policy for the city located near Los Angeles would require an alarm to be confirmed by alarm companies, motion detectors, audio sensors, video feed or telephone. Representatives from the California Alarm Association (CAA) suggested an alternative enhanced call verification where alarm companies call several pre-designated people before calling police, as well as trying to concentrate on some of the worst false alarm offenders.

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