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## News

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### False Alarm Update: Another California City Turns to Verified Response

Oct 06, 2005, VENTURA, Calif. -- The coastal city of Ventura is the latest California city to initiate a new alarm policy that includes a form of verified response. The city council in Ventura, located between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara, approved unanimously the formation of a new alarm policy where police won't respond to most alarms unless they have been verified at the source.

However, like alarm policies in nearby [Simi Valley](#) and Los Angeles, alarms will still be broadcast to patrol officers in the vicinity, who will still have the option to respond if they feel it is warranted.

The alarm ordinance was approved Oct. 4 in a 6-0 vote by the Ventura Council, according to the *Ventura County Star*. Ventura's city attorney will formulate the language of the ordinance.

Ventura Police Chief Pat Miller had urged the policy change after he said 99.5-percent of the 4,824 alarms his officers responded to in 2004 were false.

No opposition to the measure was given at the meeting, according to the *Star*, and the Ventura Chamber of Commerce expressed its approval of the measure.

Under the policy, officers will not respond to a burglar alarm at a home or business unless a resident, property owner or an alarm company employee using installed cameras can personally confirm a break-in occurred.

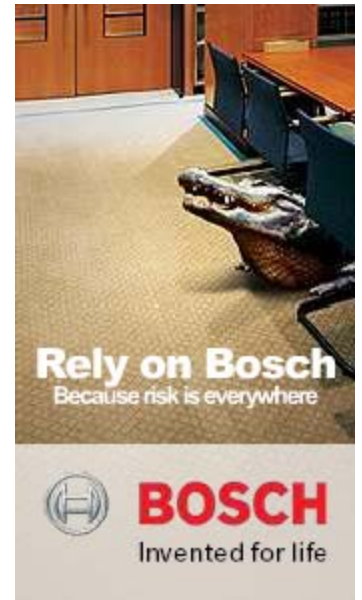
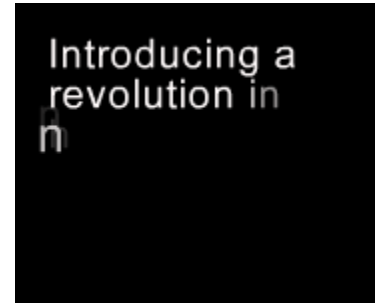
#### ***In other false alarm news ...***

**FREMONT, Calif.:**Crime statistics for the first six months after a verified response policy went into effect in the Central California city of Fremont show a slight increase in the number of burglaries. However, the city's police chief touted it was not the substantial rise opponent of the new policy predicted. According to *The Argus*, Fremont police reported 385 burglaries from April 1 to July 31 compared with 364

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for the same period in 2004.

Fremont [started enforcing on March 20 the new policy](#) where a resident, alarm owner or alarm company needs to be able to show evidence that a crime has occurred in order for police to respond.

“Everyone said that in the first two weeks, the crooks were going to come in and carry Fremont out on their backs,” Fremont Police Chief Craig Steckler told *The Argus*. “That didn't happen.”

However, insurance salesman Dennis Wolfe, an ardent critic of the new policy, told the newspaper that the statistics are meaningless and doesn't take into account the monetary value of what was burglarized.

“Is the total dollar loss being taken into consideration? Are we getting hit by more professional-type burglars or more petty-theft burglars?” Wolfe said.

**DeLAND, Fla.:** The Central Florida city of DeLand, Fla., has eliminated annual registration fees for alarm systems, but increased the fines for excessive burglar and fire alarms.

In an amendment to the alarm ordinance by the commissioners of the city, near Daytona Beach and Orlando, annual permitting was eliminated. However, after three “free” false alarms within a calendar year, alarm-system owners will be fined \$50 for a fourth false alarm, \$100 for a fifth, and \$200 for each false fire or burglar alarm after that.

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