

Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2004 8:53 PM  
Subject: LOS ANGELES ADOPTS ALARM ORDINANCE

The Los Angeles City Council adopted a new alarm ordinance today.

It is expected that it will return to Council in a few weeks to address the trust and possible other elements but there is no guarantee.

The Council did not accept public comments today, and only gave the required 72 hour notice to the public.

GLASAA has provided you a memo and recommendation to advise your customers and have the contact the Council.

Also, below is story from Wisconsin for your information.

GLASAA  
310/822-1411

>From George Gunning, Task Force Member, GLASAA Representative

Statement of  
GREATER LOS ANGELES SECURITY ALARM ASSOCIATION  
310/822-1411

September 21, 2004

The Los Angeles City Council passed an alarm ordinance on September 21, 2004 that appears to disregard the comprehensive work done by the citizen's Burglar Alarm Task Force and is in conflict with the Los Angeles Police Department's alarm dispatch policy.

The ordinance increases fines and penalties five times that of the current ordinance. **An alarm user with three false alarms in the past would have incurred a fine of \$95, and the new ordinance fines are \$495. For alarm users without a permit who have three false alarms, the former ordinance carried fines of \$190 and now the same citizen will receive fines of \$1,040.**

In addition, the ordinance passed by the City Council makes it a misdemeanor to request a call for service from the LAPD if a property has two false alarms in one year. The LAPD policy allows the citizen to make the request for service, and the LAPD responds with a broadcast and file dispatch if there are two or more alarms purported to be false.

The Greater Los Angeles Security Alarm Association provided the City Attorney, Mayor and City Council with information that addressed the

above issues based on the work of the Burglar Alarm Task Force. The passage of the alarm ordinance is disappointing and has the potential to negatively impact public safety in the City of Los Angeles.

The ordinance requires establishing a trust fund for the fines and penalties that will be mandated. The City utilizes an inflated cost for alarm response of \$115 per incident which would equal approximately \$8 million in 2004. The ordinance is estimated to generate more than \$15 million and could exceed \$20 million. The City is estimated to receive an additional \$4 million in alarm permit fees required by the ordinance.

The City Council passed the ordinance without public comment on Tuesday and the draft ordinance was not distributed until late Friday prior to the Tuesday passage. The ordinance appears to not reflect the work of the Task Force which considered public safety as a primary objective. The Council passed an ordinance that will impose costs on citizens who use alarm systems that bear no relation to public safety or costs of the service.

GLASAA is disappointed and will inform their customers of the impact of the ordinance and encourage them to contact the Mayor and the City Council to express any concerns they may have about the punitive nature of the ordinance. Citizens may reach their councilmember's by calling 3-1-1 or via e-mail at [www.lacity.org](http://www.lacity.org)

INFORMATION FROM MILWAUKEE

Original URL: <http://www.jsonline.com/news/metro/sep04/260511.asp>

Killing raises new questions on alarm policy

Rule change poses danger to other store owners, security industry says  
By JOHN DIEDRICH and GREG J. BOROWSKI  
jdiedrich@journalsentinel.com

Posted: Sept. 20, 2004

The apparent murder of a Kenosha man as he checked a burglar alarm at his business early Sunday has prompted an alarm industry official to suggest such a crime is more likely to happen in Milwaukee now that the police here require evidence of a break-in before sending officers.

**On Sunday, Milwaukee police became the first department east of the Mississippi River to adopt a policy known as "verified response." Instead of just alerting police of an alarm and address, companies must supply a report from a guard or video evidence of the intrusion.**

Chief Nannette Hegerty said she made the change because 96% of the alarm calls last year were false, wasting officers' time.

In Kenosha shortly after midnight, Heinz Krause, 66, was notified of an alarm at his business, Schneider's Auto Sales. At 2:19 a.m., his wife found him at the shop, shot in the head, Kenosha police said. They are looking for a suspect.

Kenosha police respond to alarms without the verification now required in Milwaukee, said Kenosha police Lt. John Morrissey. But Krause's alarm rang directly to his home, not to a monitoring company or to police.

Nevertheless, an alarm company owner said the Kenosha case proves the new Milwaukee policy will endanger public safety because untrained people will respond to alarms.

"This validates our point," said Chris Utter, spokesman for the Wisconsin Burglar and Fire Alarm Association. "If you don't have people trained in law enforcement, anything can happen.

"Sooner or later, this might happen in Milwaukee."

Hegerty said her department isn't advocating that home or business owners should respond to their own alarms. That should be the job of a guard hired by the alarm company who has training that private citizens don't have.

"If I pay for a burglar alarm in my home, and my company expects me to verify my own alarm, then I will be shopping for another burglar alarm company," she said.

Hegerty said the Kenosha killing was tragic, but she noted it happened in a city where officers respond to every alarm.

"It can happen anywhere," she said.

In the past, Krause has sometimes called police, sometimes not, Morrissey said. In April, Krause responded to an alarm and caught three juveniles who had broken into the business, Morrissey said.

He said Kenosha police discussed verified response after Hegerty first proposed it but decided not to adopt a similar approach. He said Kenosha sees the same percentage of false alarms, around 95%, and has had 1,309 alarms this year.

Last year, Milwaukee police responded to more than 28,000 burglar alarms.

Milwaukee Ald. Tony Zielinski, who has fought the change, said the killing should be a vivid reminder of the public-safety risks involved with the change.

"This is an abandonment to the people of this community," Zielinski said. "This policy makes no sense whatsoever. The people of this community want a law enforcement response."

The Common Council today will consider two measures, including one that would toughen Hegerty's position by requiring that alarm companies be able to fulfill the first response role. Those that could not could face the loss of their license.

The second proposal would create a task force to study the policy change now in effect and report back with alternatives.

Roughly 120 alarm companies are licensed in the city serving about 50,000 customers.