Section 9.70.090 Response upon notification.

- Upon notification by the Berkeley Police Department, the service provider or occupant shall proceed promptly and within forty-five minutes to the scene and render necessary service. This service shall include, when necessary, the opening of the premises so that they may be searched.
  (Ord. 5377-NS § 9, 1981)

Section 9.70.120 Audible alarm systems.

- It shall be unlawful to use, sell, or install an alarm system which, upon activation, emits a sound similar to sirens in use on emergency vehicles for civil defense purposes. This section shall not apply to sirens mounted inside a building which cannot be clearly heard from outside the building.
  (Ord. 5377-NS § 12, 1981)

Section 9.70.130 Audible alarm shutoff.

- It shall be unlawful to operate an audible alarm system which does not shut off within a maximum time of thirty minutes from the time of activation. This may be accomplished with either an automatic cut-off or with a rearming phase. The rearming phase must be able to distinguish between an open and closed circuit; if the circuit is broken the system shall not rearm.
  (Ord. 5377-NS § 13, 1981)

Section 9.70.140 System operation.

- Each alarm company operator shall provide accurate and complete instruction to the alarm system user in the proper use and operation of said system. Specific emphasis shall be placed on the avoidance of false alarms. All businesses which sell alarm systems, but which are not alarm company operators, are also responsible for instructing the buyer of an alarm system in the proper use of said system.
  (Ord. 5377-NS § 14, 1981)

How to Reduce False Alarms

1. Be sure to have a good quality alarm system that has been installed by a licensed alarm company.
2. Be sure that all of your employees are familiar with how your alarm system works.
3. Have your alarm system tested on a regular basis.

The Berkeley Police Department is here to assist you in crime prevention, at your request. Our Community Services Bureau can provide brochures, security checks, vacation watch and information on forming a Neighborhood Watch group in your area.

This information was provided by the Community Services Bureau

BERKELEY POLICE DEPARTMENT
2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Way
Berkeley, CA 94704

Any questions regarding your invoice, Neighborhood Watch or Crime Prevention, please call

510-981-5808 /
510-981-5819 (FAX)

12/06

FALSE ALARMS

INFORMATION ABOUT FALSE ALARMS IN THE CITY OF BERKELEY

BERKELEY MUNICIPAL CODE
SECTION 9.70

POLICE EMERGENCY: 9-1-1

FIRE & AMBULANCE: 9-1-1

POLICE NON-EMERGENCY
510-981-5900

Berkeley Municipal Code (BMC) False Alarms, Sec. 9.70

The purpose of this brochure is to provide the minimum acceptance standards and regulations applicable to burglar and holdup alarm systems, alarm businesses, alarm agents and alarm users as defined in this brochure. (Ord. 5377-NS § 1, 1981)

Police false alarms occur when the police are falsely (or sometimes accidentally) notified of an emergency, alarm, or crime.

- There is no charge for the **1st** false alarm. A **2nd** false alarm within 90 days of the first is $75.00. A **3rd** false alarm is $100.00. A **4th** false alarm is $125.00. Any false alarms there after are $125.00 each.

- If payment for a false alarm is not received within 30 days of the invoice date, the address will be placed on a **No Response List (NRL)** until payment is made. If an alarm event occurs at an address on the No Response List, police will not respond.

We have provided some basic information about burglar alarm systems and alarm requirements within the City of Berkeley. We do recommend having a burglar alarm system. Alarms are still one of the best deterrents of burglary and can also be used to call for assistance during emergencies or medical problems.

The Berkeley Police Department cannot provide recommendations of any one type of alarm system or referrals to any company which sells or services alarm systems.

When first deciding if you want an alarm system, have at least three reputable alarm companies come to your home and provide you with information and estimates on what system will best work for your building.

- We recommend that all of the exterior doors, windows and places of possible entry be alarmed with either a sensor pad or glass breakage detector. Once the exterior is secure, you may want to place motion sensors on the inside of the building.

- We also recommend that once the system is installed, in the event it be set off, the alarm company should call the you, the resident first before calling the police. This is because about 94% of the alarm calls received are due to mistakes or false alarms by owners, employees or building occupants.
- Be aware that the City of Berkeley has an ordinance regulating false alarms:
  Berkeley Municipal Code Section 9.70
  Any alarm call received from an alarm company where no criminal activity was discovered, will constitute a ***false alarm*** (wrong code entered, no code entered, open doors/windows where the motion detector sets of the alarm, workers; painter or construction without the code, etc…).

Anytime your alarm goes off (even if it only went off for a few seconds) or has an error, you should call the alarm company and provide them with your password. If the company calls the police, we will have to respond ASAP. If you or the system was at fault or you did not think the company received a signal, this will be considered a ***false alarm***. Even if you call the police you cannot cancel the call – ***only the alarm company can cancel the call after you provide them with your password.***

- Your agreement with your alarm company should include a clause for how often and how soon the company will come out and check the system for malfunctions or problems. Bad equipment is to blame for false alarms or calls for service about half of the time. You are responsible for proper working condition of your system - NOT THE ALARM COMPANY.

"Alarm system" means an assembly of equipment and devices arranged to signal the presence of a hazard requiring urgent attention and to which police are expected to respond. Fire alarm systems and alarm systems which specifically monitor temperature, humidity and any other condition not directly related to the detection of an unauthorized intrusion into a premises or an attempted robbery at a premises are specifically excluded from the provisions of this brochure.

"Alarm company operator" means any person, business, or other entity operating for any consideration which engages in the installation, normal maintenance, alteration, monitoring, selling on premises, or servicing of alarm systems or who respond to alarm systems except for any alarm agent. Alarm company operator does not include a business which merely sells from a fixed location or manufactures alarm systems unless the business services, installs, sells on premises, monitors, or responds to alarm systems at the protected premises.

"False alarm" means the activation of an alarm system through mechanical failure, malfunction, improper installation or the negligence of the owner or lessee of an alarm system or his or her employees or agents. This does not include alarms caused by earthquake, windstorm, or other violent conditions.

Section 9.70.100 Fees.

- The City Manager or his designee may prescribe, adopt and enforce rules and regulations relating to (a) responses to repeated and excessive false alarms emanating from a specific location; and (b) administration and enforcement of the collection of fees, including, but not limited to, provisions for correction of returns and amount of payment and imposition of late penalties.

Section 9.70.050 Type of alarm incidents.

- At the time an alarm system is instituted, it shall be classified as either a burglary alarm, a robbery alarm, a panic alarm, or a medical assistance signal. The alarm shall be used only for the classification established for it at the time of installation. (Ord. 5377-NS § 5, 1981)

Section 9.70.070 Notice of name of service provider or occupant.

- Every audible alarm system shall have a sign or notice posted on or near the device, posted conspicuously, with the name and telephone number of the person or company responsible for the maintenance of the system. The notice shall be posted in such a position as to be readable from the ground level outside and adjacent to the building. All silent alarm systems shall have a notice on the premises which provides the same information. (Ord. 5377-NS § 7, 1981)