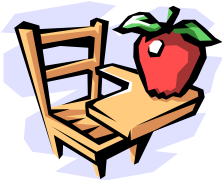


THE FACTS

- Working with limited resources is a way of life for public schools!
- Securing a school's property is ever more critical today than in years past.
- Stretching limited resources is a way of life for law enforcement agencies!
- Protecting the general public is an even greater challenge.

The reality is that patrol resources are limited and should never be wasted. Thousands of patrol hours are spent investigating alarm reports that turn out to be "false alarms."

Times have changed, building usage has changed and security systems must also change with the times. Security systems must be regularly maintained and upgraded as usage of facilities change.



Alarm companies and alarm users must be responsible for the use and maintenance of alarm systems to help assure prompt law enforcement response when an emergency really does exist.



- ✓ Be cautious in spending valuable resources. Use proper perimeter and interior protection and supervised arming/disarming. Properly installed and maintained interior motion sensors can protect classrooms, eliminating the cost of full perimeter protection. Doors to high risk/critical areas should always be contacted.
- ✓ Nothing of value should be placed within arms reach of windows. Take care in deciding the placement of expensive computer and electronic equipment.
- ✓ Properly instruct system users on false alarm prevention. With officer resources so limited and national statistics showing that approximately 80% of alarm activations are caused by user error, it is essential to properly train employees, and anyone else who has access to the facility's keys, on proper system operation. Should any alarm activations occur, a timely investigation into the cause should be performed.
- ✓ Ensure that alarm activation reports are reviewed by supervisory personnel on a weekly basis.



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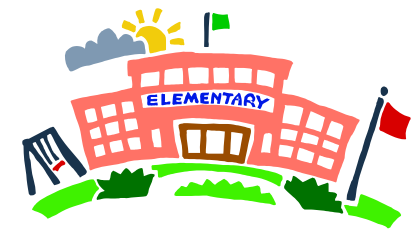
*Special thanks to the
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and the National Burglar & Fire Alarm Association
for their contributions to this brochure*

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FALSE ALARM PREVENTION FOR SCHOOLS

Does YOUR School Security System Cry Wolf?



- False Alarms Cost System Users \$\$\$
- False Alarms Waste Valuable Law Enforcement Resources
- "Crying Wolf" Can Delay Response When You Really Need It

SCHOOLS CAN REDUCE FALSE ALARMS

- When was your system last inspected?
- Proper training of all system users is essential in maintaining false alarm free systems.
- When was your last alarm system training meeting?
- Do any of your teachers work on Saturdays?
- Do they know how to operate the alarm system properly?

The security system needs to be more than another utility. A partnership between the users and the security company are critical in proper loss prevention and in reducing or minimizing false alarms. Obviously, financial considerations are an issue and, as technology changes, other options may be more affordable and appropriate.

Is the school facility used by outside groups on evenings and weekends? If so, be sure you have implemented steps to ensure that these groups do not cause false alarms. Identify the person(s) responsible for ensuring that all people have left the building, for securing and locking the facility and for arming the security system. Ensure that this person(s) has been thoroughly trained on the proper procedures, including the appropriate codes for canceling an alarm dispatch.

Be absolutely sure to secure **ALL** doors and windows before arming the alarm system. Sports teams that may be using your athletic fields in the evenings or on weekends may try to gain access to the facility for water and/or bathroom breaks. If your doors are unlocked, the kids will enter. Unless you are prepared to swear out a warrant for unlawful entry, this will be considered a false alarm! It is your responsibility to ensure that doors are properly secured and locked.

Ensure that there is an audible indication at the school site when an alarm is activated so that the alarm users know when the alarm has activated and can take steps to avoid false dispatches. If all parties involved work together to minimize false alarms, the community will often join the security team and help watch over the facility, acting as another deterrent for the criminal element.

PREVENT YOUR SCHOOL SECURITY SYSTEM FROM CRYING WOLF

- ✓ Focus attention on protecting high risk areas.
- ✓ Request that the Head of Security for the school district be involved in the process and that he/she is informed about every false alarm response.
- ✓ Help the school district security create a way to document each false alarm response.
- ✓ Install audible indicators so that intruders are aware that they have been detected. Dispatching on dual sensor activations may help reduce the occurrence of false alarms.
- ✓ Redesign systems so that only limited areas of protection are disarmed when after hours access is needed. High risk areas (computer and science labs, music rooms, office areas) should be armed at the end of the school day and disarmed only for cleaning at night.
- ✓ Assure that the system is designed to allow access to the keypad(s) from the various areas, such as: office area (for arming/disarming the office as well as a master for the entire site), computer lab (to operate that system independently from the other sites), classrooms; cafeterias, multi-purpose rooms, and gyms (can be set up to arm/disarm independently due to the varied usages and users). Your alarm provider can design your system to meet both your usage and financial needs.
- ✓ Implement a detailed program identifying system users. Key-swipe entry into a building is a good way to track who has been accessing the building and, therefore, might be an effective way to determine who needs additional training on arming or disarming the alarm system.
- ✓ If financially practical, assign individual arm/disarm codes for each system user.
- ✓ Schedule annual system inspections.



- ✓ Arrange periodic user training. The best time is right before school begins and after returning from each break.
- ✓ Have the systems monitored by professional central stations with supervised arming/disarming and routine test reporting.
- ✓ Have the site principal determine the arming and disarming time for each area of protection. Through open communication with the alarm company, arming schedules can be tailored for each site's use/personality.
- ✓ Once a schedule is established, the central station should contact either the principal or other designated district employee when a system is left unarmed or is disarmed outside of regularly scheduled hours. Site principals and district staff should assume the responsibility of controlling access to the facilities.
- ✓ Weekly reports should be sent to the school site indicating when the systems were actually turned on and off and by which user.
- ✓ Use the most advanced technology to allow affordable installations (supervised wireless or hardwired equipment, as the building construction dictates).
- ✓ Maintain strict control over key assignments, considering single door access systems to replace old keylocks.
- ✓ When it is necessary to request law enforcement dispatch, district personnel should also respond, but never enter the building without an escort.
- ✓ Request that your monitoring company use Enhanced Call Verification (ECV), which means that if they receive no answer at the alarm site, they call a responsible party's or authorized user's cell phone prior to requesting law enforcement dispatch.



(Continued on Back Panel)