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## FARA 2007 Awards

### 2007 FARA Public Safety False Alarm Achievement Award

- Winner - Kansas City Police Department
- Honorable Mention -
  - Baltimore County, False Alarm Reduction Program
  - Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, Loudoun County, Virginia
  - Montgomery County Police Dept., False Alarm Reduction Section, Maryland

### 2007 False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award

- Winner - Guardian Protection Services, Inc.
- Honorable Mention
  - Crime Prevention Security Systems, LLC (CPSS), Gainesville, Florida
  - Emergency 24, Inc., Chicago, Illinois
  - Guardian Alarm Systems, Inc., Germantown, Maryland

### 2007 FARA Achievement Award:

- Winner - Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (MDBFAA)
- Honorable Mention
  - National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA)

**Detail descriptions for each award follow**

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### Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award

**Description:** Alarm reduction program has shown meaningful or significant reduction in number of false of alarms over a 3 to 5 year period.

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### Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Winner

**Kansas City Police Department, Missouri**

**Nominated by:** Mike Thoelke

**Rationale:** The Kansas City, Missouri Police Department has accomplished significant false alarm reductions over the last five years. As you know, Kansas City, Missouri has a population of approximately 500,000 and is spread out over a four county area which has an excess of 300 square miles for its 1,400 sworn officers to police.

Kansas City has struggled with the problems created by false alarms since the early 1970's. Between 1980 and 1997, several unsuccessful false alarm programs were tested. In July 1997, the current false alarm ordinance was passed. The ordinance has many weak points and differs from most model ordinances because the ability to fine alarm abusers in a timely manner is not included. In short, the ordinance requires alarm users to pay a \$45 fee to obtain an alarm permit. The permit must be renewed each year. The renewal fee is determined by the user's false alarm record during the previous permit year. If the alarm user has no false alarms, the permit renews at no charge. Those experiencing false alarms are charged a renewal fee of \$25 per false alarm. Residential alarm users are allowed two "free" false alarms and have a \$75 cap on their renewal fees. Commercial alarm users are charged a renewal fee of \$25 per false alarm with no limitations on the renewal fee.

At first, the new ordinance did not appear to have much of an impact on the false alarm problem. The Department initially assigned two civilians to the Alarm Section and they had little time to address false alarm problems. Most of their workday was committed to issuing new permits and attempting to update permit records with the voluminous false alarm dispatch data. By mid-year in 2000, the Alarm Section was over ten months behind in its work and false alarms were still on the rise. In 2000, the 31,000 registered alarm users had 51,426 false alarms which resulted in a false alarm rate of 1.77 false alarms per user.

In October, 2000, I was appointed to my current position of Alarm Administrator. At that same time, the office staff was increased to include five Administrative Assistants. Within a few months, the Alarm Section became current with its workload and gained the ability to address false alarm problems as they arose. As a result, the number of false alarms in Kansas City has dropped significantly each of the years that have ensued. By the end of 2006, although the number of registered alarm users had increased 45% to 45,087, the number of false alarms for the year had been reduced 59% from the year 2000 to 20,911. The False alarm rate during this time frame dropped from 1.77 to 0.64 which is a 64% reduction – see attached chart for details.

During the last five years, the following Alarm Section policies and procedures have helped to identify alarm abusers and address their problems in a timely manner:

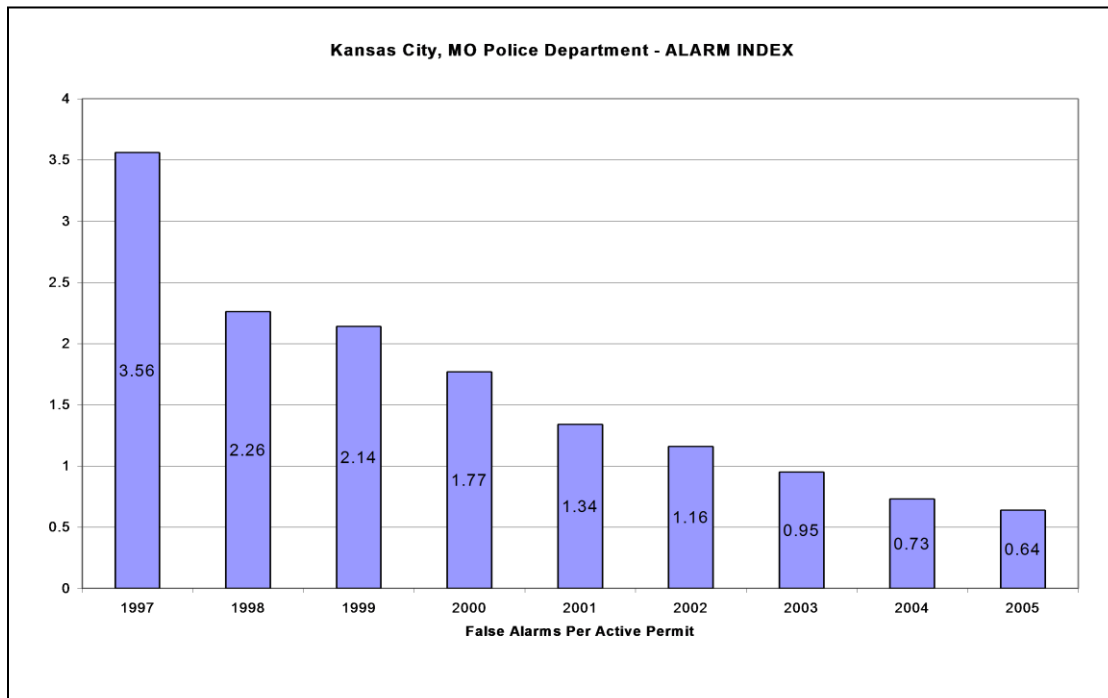
- Sites must have a valid alarm permit to be eligible for police response to alarm activations.
- Alarm permit applications are processed the day they are received.
- False alarm incidents are posted to permit records the next business day
- Informational letters are mailed to the alarm permit holder after their first, third and fifth false alarms.
- Permit holders receive a courtesy call from the Alarm Section staff after their third false alarm.
- For continued police response, residential permit holders must attend Alarm User Awareness Class once they have experienced six false alarms in a permit year.
- For continued police response, business permit holders must attend Alarm User Awareness Class once they have experienced ten false alarms in a permit year.
- Staff members are assigned to personally contact all alarm users summoned to alarm class to help them determine the source of their false alarm problem and to monitor their progress.

The Kansas City, Missouri Police Department's "Alarm User Awareness Class" has been conducted monthly since November, 2001. Approximately 1,300 alarm permit holders have attended. Although numerous new permit holders have attended class, most of the attendees were alarm abusers whose attendance was mandatory for continued police response to their alarm calls. The class has been considered very successful because only 7% of the attendees had future false alarm problems. The class is patterned after the NBFAA model and was formed with the assistance of two local FARA members – you, from the Leawood Police Department and Debbie Austin and Jerry Tallman from the Overland Park Police Department. The Kansas City Burglar and Fire Alarm Association also has contributed heavily to the success of the class. The organization actively supports the class and its False Alarm Chairman, Joe Pfefer of the Jade Alarm Company has taught over fifty of the classes. Mr. Pfefer, who owns a local alarm

installation and monitoring business, is extremely dedicated to teaching the class and gives individual problem-solving attention and advice to each attendee.

In summary, it is my opinion that the Kansas City, Missouri Police Department has been successful in reducing the City's false alarm problem even though its ordinance is less than ideal because:

- The Department has staffed the Alarm Section adequately.
- False alarm problems are identified and addressed in a timely manner.
- Problem alarm users are contacted personally by the Alarm Section staff.
- The Alarm Section offers public education on solving and avoiding false alarms with its monthly presentation of the "Alarm User Awareness Class".
- The local alarm industry professionals have partnered with the Alarm Section in addressing false alarm problem.



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## Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Honorable Mention

### Baltimore County, False Alarm Reduction Program

**Nominated by:** Steven Heggemann

**Rationale:** Baltimore County's False Alarm Reduction Program, like most mature alarm reduction programs, has significantly reduced both the number of false alarms and the false alarm rate. In 2000, the residential and commercial false alarm rate stood at 0.92. By 2005, the false alarm rate was cut by more than half to 0.44.

What sets the Baltimore County Alarm Reduction Team apart is that significant reductions were achieved in spite of the County's decision in 2001 to:

- reduce the fee schedule for false alarms by nearly 50%;
- move from a "look back" 365 day period for determining false alarm fees to a calendar year;

- allow an annual waiver of one false alarm when the alarm system is tested and inspected;
- increase the deadline for filing an appeal of a false alarm from 30 to 90 days
- extend the due date for invoices from 30 to 90 days

In 2006, less than 15% of commercial and 3% of residential alarm system users were charged a fee for false alarms. Clearly, the significant reduction in false alarm rates has not been achieved by relying solely on financial penalties. Members of the Alarm Reduction Team seek out and use each personal contact with alarm system users as an opportunity to increase their understanding of the dangers and hidden costs of false alarms. Although very time consuming, these educational/outreach initiatives have proven to be highly effective tools in motivating residential and commercial alarm system users to further reduce their false alarm rates.

Baltimore County's Alarm Reduction Team actively develops and maintains partnerships to advance and support initiatives, programs and legislation that would not be possible if acting alone. Recent partners include: The Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, IQ Certification Program, False Alarm Management Professionals in the Mid Atlantic Region, vendors and numerous alarm companies.

Baltimore County's Alarm Management program has benefited immeasurably from its association with F.A.R.A.

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## **Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

### **Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, Loudoun County, Virginia**

**Nominated by:** Sally Shaffer, Alarm Administrator

**Rationale:** The False Alarm Reduction Unit of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office would like to be considered for the FARA Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award. We have registered 19,492 alarm users and reduced our responses from 12,271 in 2003 to 8,935 in 2006 and 6,696 (estimated) in 2007 and currently have a dispatch rate of .34. Since inception, we have invoiced and collected revenue that allows this Unit to be self-supporting.

The Federal government recently ranked Loudoun County, Virginia number one among the nation's counties in both population and job growth. It has earned the reputation as one of most desirable places to live and work in the United States.

The majority of the County's growth is due to new residents. This type of growth, however, does have its price. Demand for public services has affected every area of government especially public safety. The growth in building has also brought in an increased number of alarm security systems attributing to an increase in alarm responses. As the calls for alarm activations increased, so did the demand on law enforcement.

In order to evaluate the impact false alarms were having in Loudoun County, an analysis was conducted in April 2003. Using this study, we were able to project the impact false alarms would have on Loudoun County if they were left unchecked (projected 2009 - 14,830 responses). This study further analyzed the impact of a false alarm reduction ordinance and gave us the ammunition needed to begin formulating a plan for a false alarm ordinance.

During this process (2004 – 2005) several things occurred that precipitated alarm reduction prior to the ordinance actually being passed. The first and most significant event occurred in 2004 when the school board took action to address the false alarms issues within the county schools. Rather than being charged for false alarms, they contacted their monitoring company and instructed them to call central dispatch for school security instead of emergency communications. School security now handles the alarm calls creating a significant reduction in the number of false alarms requiring law enforcement response.

In March 2005 the Board of Supervisors passed the False Alarms Ordinance of Loudoun County. The ordinance established the False Alarm Reduction Unit in the Sheriff’s Office to administer the ordinance. This unit consists of two positions --- the Alarm Administrator and the Assistant Alarm Administrator.

The alarm ordinance requires all alarm systems, residential and commercial be registered with the Sheriff’s Office. To aid in this, a web-page was developed which included, the County Ordinance, questions and answers about the program, fine structure, tips on reducing false alarms and an on-line registration form. This allowed residential, commercial and alarm companies to register on-line without submitting any additional paperwork.

The ordinance also imposes a fine on alarm users that have three or more false alarms in any given calendar year. The third false alarm is invoiced at \$100 and increases with each false alarm thereafter (+\$50 residential, + \$100 commercial). If an alarm user fails to pay the accessed false alarm fine after 60 days, the site is placed in no-response status.

To begin the implementation process, media coverage was used to inform citizens of the expected date of enforcement. Courtesy letters were sent to all users experiencing false alarms along with a brochure that outlined the program, fine structure and what they could do to prevent false alarms. We saw a significant drop in false alarm responses well before the actual enforcement date (July 2006). Since July 2006, even with two free false alarms, this unit has collected 84.07% of billed calls.

#### COMPARISON

Year	Request For Dispatch	Actual Responses	Canceled	Valid Calls	Percent Reduction	% Reduction From Base
2003 (process started)	13,579	12,271	1,308	15		
2004	12,177	10,749	1,428	10	12.4%	12.4%
2005 (Ordinance passed)	11,732	10,182	1,550	10	5.3%	17.0%
2006 (Ord. enforced)	10,550	8,935	1,615	13	12.2%	27.2%
2007 - projected (1 <sup>st</sup> qtr actual)	7,928	6,696	1,232	0	25.10%	45.4%

If this trend continues, 2007 should again show a major decrease in false alarm activations. As overall calls for service increases, the number of alarm calls continues to show a decrease.

Developing, enacting, and implementing a successful false alarm reduction program is not easy. However, the rewards are remarkable and certainly make the pain of start-up worthwhile. False alarm reduction benefits all aspects of our communities; law enforcement personnel have more time to engage in law enforcement activities; alarm users and alarm companies become more aware and conscientious of their alarm usage; and alarm signals begin to carry greater weight when signals are not automatically considered false.

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## **Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

### **Montgomery County Police Dept., False Alarm Reduction Section, Maryland**

**Nominated by:** Sue Clark, Diane Pennington, Marilynne Shifflett, and Norma Beaubien, Staff, MCPD FARS

**Rationale:** Montgomery County, Maryland has had an alarm law in effect since 1981. In 1993, responsibility for enforcement of that ordinance was transferred to the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), which created the False Alarm Reduction Section (FARS). Since 1995, when enforcement of the amended alarm law began, the FARS has been successful in reducing the number of false alarms to which police officers respond in Montgomery County by **64.4%**, even while the number of newly registered alarm users rose by 118%, saving the county approximately \$1,730,700 and gaining 12,820 hours of police officer time *in 2006 alone*.

Montgomery County has a well-written, highly enforced alarm ordinance, and an extremely dedicated staff of four, who have not only enforced the ordinance, but developed new initiatives to help enhance further false alarm reduction. The main provisions of the ordinance are:

- Alarm companies are responsible for registering all of their customers with the FARS.
- All alarm users; i.e., residential, commercial, schools, government facilities, etc., must be registered at a cost of \$30.
- Alarm companies must not request police dispatch for any unregistered alarm user or for any alarm user in a violation status after notification of such violation by the FARS.
- Alarm users must pay escalating false alarm response fees for two or more false alarms in a calendar year. The fees begin at \$25 for the second false alarm and escalate to \$1000 for residential alarm users at the 15th and each subsequent false alarm and to \$4000 for commercial alarm users at the 20th and each subsequent false alarm.
- Alarm users must have a licensed alarm company inspect their system upon the third false alarm in a calendar year.
- Alarm users must upgrade their alarm system to meet current county installation standards, as defined by Executive Regulation, upon the 6th false alarm in a calendar year.
- Police must not respond to a request for dispatch if the alarm user fails to register, fails to pay false alarm response fees or fails to upgrade the system when required. Additionally, police will not respond if the alarm company fails to obtain the required license, cannot provide a valid user registration or company license number, or provides a registration number where the name and/or address does not match the pre-filled FARS user information.
- Alarm users must renew their alarm registration every two years at a cost of \$10. If an alarm user fails to renew in a timely manner, no "free" false alarms are granted and an additional \$100 fee is imposed in addition to any other false alarm response fees assessed. (This provision was enacted in 2003 and explains why the number of alarm users actually went down in that year.)
- Alarm companies are required to obtain a Montgomery County Alarm Business License, which is renewable annually, at a cost of \$200.

- Alarm companies are required to cancel an alarm dispatch when it is determined that the signal is false.
- Alarm companies are required to attempt to verify the validity of the alarm signal prior to requesting police dispatch, except for duress and holdup alarms, by placing a telephone call to the site.

Montgomery County boasts one of the lowest false dispatch rates of any jurisdiction in the country, with residential alarm users at .16, commercial at .76, and combined at .24. False dispatch rates may be the truest measure of false alarm reduction, as it calculates the number of false alarm dispatches relative to the total number of alarm users. The false alarm dispatch rate is the only rate, which takes into account the growth of the alarm use base. The Montgomery County FARS has been successful in reducing the false dispatch rate every year (with the exception of 2000, which remained constant overall) and has done so for a full ten years. The following chart depicts dispatch rates from the base year of 1994 through 2006.

### Montgomery County, Maryland – False Alarm Dispatch Rates

Year	Residential	Commercial	Combined	Alarm Users
1994	N/A	N/A	1.43	29,756
1995	.66	2.29	.98	36,436
1996	.54	1.82	.78	42,150
1997	.45	1.32	.61	48,008
1998	.36	1.06	.48	54,175
1999	.35	1.04	.44	58,143
2000	.32	1.09	.44	61,334
2001	.28	.98	.38	64,836
2002	.25	.94	.35	66,525
2003	.23	.88	.32	66,474
2004	.21	.89	.30	63,748
2005	.18	.86	.26	63,970
2006	.16	.76	.24	64,835

\*Alarm Users column represents combined residential and commercial users. Biennial renewal provision was enacted and took effect in 2003.

In calendar year 2006, the MCPD FARS reduced false alarms to which police officers responded by an *additional* 4.8% over 2005. This number is particularly significant because that reduction was achieved in the eleventh year of enforcement of the amended ordinance. The FARS has demonstrated a comprehensive, sustained false alarm reduction effort for many years, which is still showing remarkable success. The chart below, entitled False Alarm Reduction, depicts the overall success of the program.

### Montgomery County, Maryland – False Alarm Reduction

Year	Requests for Dispatch	Dispatched	No Response	Verified Calls	% Reduction	% Reduction From Base
1994	43,936	42,821	1,115*			
1995	40,967	35,624	4,855	488	-16.8%	-15.7%
1996	40,534	32,390	7,339	805	-9.1%	-24.3%
1997	45,791	29,219	15,057	1,515	-9.8%	-32.0%
1998	46,839	25,877	19,371	1,591	-11.4%	-39.6%
1999	48,434	25,951	20,932	1,551	+003%	-39.4%
2000	48,603	26,877	20,172	1,554	+.035%	-37.2%
2001	45,702	24,855	19,026	1,821	-7.5%	-41.9%
2002	46,409	23,402	21,064	1,943	-5.8%	-45.3%
2003	44,673	21,452	21,431	1,790	-8.3%	-49.9%
2004	38,248	19,190	17,492	1,566	-10.5%	-55.2%

2005	36,998	16,443	18,986	1,569	-14.3%	-61.6%
2006	36,751	15,652	19,230	1,869	-4.8%	-64.4%

\*Does not include dispatch vs. non-dispatch or verified calls for January, February or March, 1994, as statistics for those months are not available.

An impressive result of the alarm management program has been the huge savings in number of hours and work years of police officer time. The following chart, entitled Cumulative Savings, depicts revenue, hours and work years saved as a result of the program.

### Montgomery County, Maryland – Cumulative Savings

Year	Revenue Saved	Hours Saved	Work Years Saved
1994	\$ 55,750	743	.35
1995	\$ 242,750	3,236	1.56
1996	\$ 366,950	4,892	2.35
1997	\$ 752,850	10,038	4.82
1998	\$ 968,550	12,914	6.21
1999	\$1,046,600	13,954	6.71
2000	\$1,008,600	13,448	6.47
2001	\$1,046,430	12,684	6.10
2002	\$1,895,760	14,043	13.5
2003	\$1,928,790	14,301	13.75
2004	\$1,574,280	12,794	12.30
2005	\$1,708,740	12,657	12.17
2006	\$1,730,700	12,820	12.32
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$14,326,750</b>	<b>138,514</b>	<b>98.61</b>

FARS staff also implemented a "Major Offender" program, whereby they identify those alarm users with the highest number of false alarms in a given time period and meet on site with the user and their alarm company to determine the cause and suggest solutions. FARS staff have met with hundreds of alarm users over the past several years, with all but one alarm user showing positive results.

For the above-stated reasons, we believe that the Montgomery County False Alarm Reduction Program is worthy of the FARA Public Safety Achievement Award.



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## **False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award:**

**Description:** Alarm reduction program has shown meaningful or significant reduction in number of false alarms over a 3 to 5 year period.

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### **False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Winner**

#### **Guardian Protection Services, Inc., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

**Nominated by:** Sue Clark, Program Specialist 1, Montgomery County Police Department

**Rationale:** The customer service department of Guardian Protection Services, Inc., under the very capable direction of Eugene Kaminski, has provided outstanding service to both the Montgomery County False Alarm Reduction Section (FARS), as well as to their Montgomery County customers. The county alarm law requires alarm companies to request police dispatch using the FARS assigned alarm user registration number. If the monitoring company cannot provide that user registration number, no dispatch will occur. As such, it is imperative that registration numbers exist and that they are relayed correctly.

The FARS receives daily telephone calls from Christine Collier-Davies in their efforts to check on the status of registrations for their customers, whether they are new or takeover accounts. The customer service department sends letters to new customers reminding them of their alarm registration responsibilities under the alarm law. They also send letters reminding customers of any renewals that may be due when they have an account takeover from another company. Guardian Protection Services, Inc. has a high volume of new home sale alarm installations and the time lapse between when the contract is signed and when the home is actually built and move-in ready could be many months. This adds to possible confusion that may arise over whether a registration exists or not.

Guardian Protection Services, Inc also provides monitoring for smaller alarm installation companies and GPS does an excellent job assuring those customers are registered properly before placing them online for dispatch.

Ms. Collier-Davies sends weekly faxes of new customers to ensure that they have the appropriate registration number before placing those customers into service for monitoring. Mr. Kaminski, team leader in customer service for Montgomery County, takes it upon himself to request a customer list, above the yearly list the FARS sends with the license renewal application, to ensure that all of his customers are registered as required. He also utilizes the Maryland State Property Tax records to verify customer property sales and notifies this office promptly of a change in ownership, as specified by the Montgomery County Code.

Guardian Protection Services does an outstanding job of ensuring that their customers will receive the public safety response they expect as indicated above. For this reason, we believe they are deserving of the Industry Achievement Award.

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## **False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

### **Emergency 24, Inc., Chicago, Illinois**

**Nominated by:** Marilynne Shifflett, Program Specialist 2, Montgomery County Police Department

**Rationale:** Emergency 24, Inc. is a third-party monitoring company, which conducts business in Montgomery County, Maryland, among other places. This is a company that the False Alarm Reduction Section (FARS) in Montgomery County considers to be a large company. Based in Illinois, with a local office in Montgomery County, they have approximately 5,000 customers in this county. They also do business in surrounding jurisdictions in Maryland, and in the State of Virginia. They are a company that gets the job done. They know the local law and provide information as required for the different jurisdictions. In Montgomery county, if a monitoring company fails to provide either their license number or the alarm user's registration number, police officers will not be dispatched. Emergency 24, Inc. understands the seriousness of this matter, and they always provide both numbers as required so their customers receive the service they expect and for which they pay. Emergency 24 follows up with the customer and the alarm installation company when there is a problem with an account. They monitor both commercial and residential alarm systems. I commend them for all their good work. They are an excellent monitoring company.

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## **False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

### **Guardian Alarm Systems, Inc., Germantown, Maryland**

**Nominated by:** Sue Clark, Program Specialist 1, Montgomery County Police Department

**Rationale:** Guardian Alarm Systems, Inc., based in Germantown, Maryland has approximately 330 customers in Montgomery County. They also do business in surrounding Maryland jurisdictions and in the State of Virginia. A portion of Guardian Alarm's business deals with the installation of alarm systems in rental apartment complexes. Guardian Alarm Systems, Inc. is outstanding in keeping registration information up to date as renters move in and out of these units. Anyone, who has ever had to deal with the turnover and other problems inherent in rental facilities, knows what a daunting task this can be.

When discussing Guardian Alarm with other jurisdictions in the area, we heard the same thing over and over, "They are a company that gets the job done." We commend them for all their good work, but most especially for the excellent job they do of maintaining accurate, up-to-date alarm user information on rental units.

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## **False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

### **Crime Prevention Security Systems, LLC (CPSS), Gainesville, Florida**

**Nominated by:** John Moorhouse, Alachua County Sheriff's Office (Endorsed by: Ron Walters, CARE, SIAC)

**Rationale:** I am writing on behalf of Crime Prevention Security Systems, LLC, (CPSS) a locally owned and operated Gainesville, Florida corporation owned/operated by John A. Pastore, Jr. and his wife Randi Elrad and family. They have served the life safety needs of North Central Florida since 1975 and are responsible for installing/servicing/monitoring a wide variety of security products including medical panic, fire suppression, CCTV and access control systems.

CPSS has worked very closely with the law enforcement community during the creation of our ordinances. Although at first Mr. Pastore did not embrace the ordinances with open arms, but is now a total advocate. The ordinances were created in 1999 as result of escalating false alarms. Law Enforcement (Alachua County Sheriff's Office & the Gainesville Police Department) recognized the need for such ordinances, and with the help of the industry, two ordinances were created and modeled after the Model States Ordinance.

A False Alarm Reduction Unit was then created and has received great success and even boasts reductions up to 76% since inception. CPSS has been very instrumental in taking the lead with the Contractors and Monitoring community and has been very proactive with education in public forums as well as their clients.

CPSS only installs SIA compliant equipment and their staff is certified by the State of Florida to maintain/install/monitor alarm systems. A complete package of servicing their customer base from installation to monthly monitoring has been their greatest asset. CPSS staff is the first line of defense in customer support, and in some instances have gone overboard with customer support/education. They have been able to reach their customer base with hands on education and created procedures for canceling dispatches, and even educate their customers on methods for updating key holders. CPSS staff even donate their time monthly to help teach our False Alarm Reduction Classes taught for both Law Enforcement and Fire Rescue.

CPSS also owns a local monitoring company called Universal Monitoring. Whether it's on the installing or monitoring side, CPSS is quick to address customer concerns immediately. For CPSS and Universal Monitoring, false alarm reduction is a "win-win" for everyone because it allows Law Enforcement to remain available for other priority responses. It also keeps Deputies/Officers from becoming complacent when responding to alarms, thus keeping both LEO and citizens safer in the event of a true emergency.

It's easy to recognize the large companies alarm companies when they take action. It's even harder to realize that over half of our alarm customers are still serviced by local companies such as CPSS, and CPSS deserve the same degree of recognition as much larger companies.

Regardless of your decision, please accept our agency's gratitude for the outstanding work performed by the members of FARA who work diligently to keep our communities safe.

**TO: The FARA, Awards Committee**

**Re: Industry False Alarm Reduction Achievement Award**

I am writing to you on behalf of John Pastore and his company; Crime Prevention Security Systems an alarm company doing business in Central Florida. It is my understanding they are being considered for an award by your organization.

My history with John goes back almost 10 years when I was working with the City of Gainesville and the Alachua County Sheriffs Office to develop ordinances to combat false alarm dispatches. ***Of particular note here is the fact that the ordinances in these two jurisdictions were the first to my knowledge to adopt the entire FARA Model Ordinance and the results speak for themselves. A reduction in police dispatches of 76% in Alachua County and 74% in the City of Gainesville; and as the largest contractor in the market, CPSS can claim their fair share of those results.***

At the time the ordinances were being passed I truly felt that John was a reluctant participant and did not necessarily embrace the concept of alarm reduction. Be that as it may, John participated in the process and listened to what was being said even though some of it might have a potential negative effect on a large part of his customer base. Over the first few years of the ordinance John and his company grew to not only accept but to embrace the concept of alarm

ordinances and their intended results. While most companies did the same, as time grew so did John, not just in company size but in stature within his community and the alarm industry in Florida. John became an outspoken proponent for alarm reduction and put his money where his mouth was. I have no way of proving this but I am fairly confident that his company was the first to switch exclusively to the CP-01 alarm equipment, something that I had begun preaching in the mid 90's.

John also became aggressive within his company to step up the education of his customers and looked at each customer as an investment in his own future. John's employees recognize that the majority of all dispatches are due to customer error but instead of blaming it on the customer; they do what ever is necessary to train them in the responsible use of their alarms.

The results are apparent as he now runs one of the premiere companies in Florida, and serves on the Alarm Association of Florida Board of Directors and participates locally with the alarm unit in educating all alarm customers in the area. It is the action of companies that are considered mid-to small in size that will eventually change the face of alarm reduction.

When people like John step up and answer the call they set an example for their peers and this has a very desirable trickle down affect. To this day John counsels his peers on the benefits of working hand in hand with law enforcement.

All too often we recognize the large companies when they take action. At times we tend to forget that nationally over half of the alarm customers are still serviced by local companies and companies at this level deserve just as much recognition.

Please consider this letter as my hearty endorsement of Crime Prevention Security Systems as a candidate for this award. Regardless of your decision please accept my gratitude for the good work that is done daily by the members of FARA throughout the country as you work to keep our communities safe.

Best Regards - Ron Walters, Director

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## **FARA Achievement Award:**

Description: Significant or meaningful contributions towards the FARA mission.

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## **FARA Achievement Award Winner**

### **Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association**

**Nominated by:** Sue Clark, Diane Pennington, Marilynne Shifflett, and Norma Beaubien, Staff, MCPD FARS

**Rationale:** The FARA Achievement Award is presented for significant or meaningful contributions towards the FARA mission, which states, in part, "...to foster an environment of cooperation among law enforcement, the alarm industry and the alarm user." The Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association embodies that spirit of cooperation from top to bottom and has for several years.

Most recently, alarm coordinators in the State of Maryland, with the full support and assistance of the MDBFAA, introduced legislation for the second year running in the Maryland General Assembly to require Enhanced Call Verification on a statewide basis. Leadership of the MDBFAA were instrumental in getting delegates to sponsor the ECV bill and to have it assigned to committee for discussion and vote. They also scheduled meetings with House leaders to discuss the bill and its benefits and to try to learn where the bill

failed last year and how we could overcome that this year. Leadership attended those meetings with public safety alarm coordinators, which showed legislators a united front on this issue. MDBFAA testified alongside law enforcement at the hearings. It is rewarding to be able to sit at the same table and support an initiative that is a win-win for everyone involved. Absent the wonderful working relationship developed between MDBFAA and local law enforcement, this initiative may well never had made it to the General Assembly floor.

Additionally, MDBFAA has been working to enact minimum training standards for alarm technicians in the State of Maryland. They introduced a bill in last year's General Assembly requiring the State Police to define training standards and to ensure that technicians working in the State of Maryland were qualified to install, repair and maintain alarm equipment. The bill was introduced with the full support of local alarm coordinators, their public safety departments and local FOP's. The local alarm coordinators feel that requiring minimum training standards will assist in the reduction of false dispatches and feel that those standards are best defined on a state level, where there will be a level playing field.

Finally, the MDBFAA was also influential in getting FARA's Regional Training Program off the ground. They sponsored FARA's beta class, held for Maryland alarm coordinators to see the training and critique it before we made it available for general distribution. MDBFAA had some of their members participate in the training and offer suggestions. They also secured the training facility free of charge to FARA and provided lunches for the two-day training class. Without their assistance in this endeavor, FARA would have been hard-pressed to offer the beta class free of charge.

For the above reasons, we respectfully submit that the Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association has provided both significant and meaningful contributions to the FARA mission and are richly deserving of the FARA Achievement Award.

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## **FARA Achievement Award Honorable Mention**

### **National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA)**

**Nominated by:** Jim Cogswell, Leawood Police Department

I would like to nominate the National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA) for the FARA Achievement Award. Since their inception, members of NESA have shown a great willingness to work with us on the false alarm issue. They have included FARA in their annual meetings and requested our participation on many of their committees. They have a great willingness to hear what public safety has to say and then to act on our suggestions, which is rare indeed. Representatives of NESA worked very hard with FARA to co-author our Guide to Alarm Equipment, which is a magnificent manual that describes major alarm system components and their individual functions, provides recommended applications and lists either the false alarm potential or false alarm prevention aspects of each. This guide is useful to public safety and alarm industry professionals alike and is a document of which we can all be proud.