

Restaurant Alarms: False Alarms to Go



The fast-paced and ever-changing atmosphere of a restaurant is a breeding ground for false alarms. Please take the following precautions to reduce false alarms.

- Make sure all employees are trained on the use of the alarm system. Add training on the use of the alarm system to your orientation for all new employees who might use the alarm.
- Hold monthly employee training sessions emphasizing the following:
 - Remind employees to properly secure the building windows and doors before arming the alarm system.
 - Review the false alarm cancellation procedure including alarm company phone number and password.
 - Discuss the proper use of hold up or panic buttons and their locations.
 - Provide thorough instruction on arming and disarming the alarm system.
- Make sure opening and closing employees have the current alarm code and passwords and know how to use each. The alarm code arms and disarms the system. The password cancels a public safety dispatch and avoids a false alarm.
- Post the alarm monitoring company phone number in an area that is highly visible for employees.
- Make sure all doors and windows latch and lock properly. Be sure to check the drive-thru window if you have one. Doors blown open by the wind are still considered false alarms!
- Seasonal decorations, promotional signs and balloons will cause false alarms. Be conscious of your displays.
- Clean motion detectors and other alarm devices periodically. Kitchen grease collecting on devices can lead to false alarms.
- Be proactive with your alarm system maintenance and battery replacement. Have the alarm serviced on a regular basis and contact your alarm company to schedule a test at least quarterly.
- Require your alarm monitoring company to make a minimum of two phone calls to two different numbers prior to dispatching law enforcement for burglar alarms.

Keep your alarm monitoring company up to date on all employees who use the alarm.

- If you give them a key, give them a code for the alarm and a password to cancel the alarm.
- Give them home and cell phone numbers for at least two people who have keys to the restaurant and can come to the site quickly in the event of an alarm.
- Assign individual codes and passwords to each alarm user so you will not have to change them when you change employees.

False alarms waste precious resources and cost businesses money. Work with your alarm company and local public safety agencies to eliminate false alarms. For more false alarm reduction techniques, please visit www.faraonline.org and www.alarmuser.org.