



COUNTY OF WELLINGTON

Committee Report

To: Chair and Members of the Wellington County O.P.P. Detachment Board
From: Kelly-Ann Wingate, Purchasing and Risk Analyst
Date: Wednesday, May 08, 2024
Subject: **At Fault False Alarm Reduction Policy Report**

Background:

As of April 1, 2024 the Police Services Act R.S.O 1990, c. P15 has been repealed and replaced with the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019. To reflect this change the At Fault False Alarm Reduction Policy needed to be updated.

At the request of the Board, the policy was also amended to change the process of the 4th or greater number of alarms to be billed directly to the customer, omitting an invite to a Board meeting.

Attached is Appendix A for the Board by-law 1-24, Wellington County OPP Detachment Board At Fault False Alarm Reduction Policy.

Recommendation:

That By-Law 1-22 be repealed and replaced with By-Law 1-24 and;

That the At Fault False Alarm Policy commence on April 1, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'K. Wingate'.

Kelly-Ann Wingate
Purchasing and Risk Analyst

APPENDIX A

WELLINGTON COUNTY OPP DETACHMENT BOARD

AT FAULT FALSE ALARM REDUCTION POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The Wellington County OPP responds to false intrusion alarms every year. It is found that most of the At Fault False Alarms are activated by faulty equipment or human error. The Wellington County OPP Detachment Board and the Wellington County OPP will work toward reducing the number of At Fault False Alarms requiring police response by monitoring alarm locations and issuing fee invoices to the owners of premises having At Fault False Alarms.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to the Wellington County OPP and the County of Wellington Alarm Coordinator and OPP Communications Operators for the County of Wellington, commencing April 1, 2024.

AUTHORITY

Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, Section 69 and Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25, Sections 391 and 398

PROCEDURE

- 1. Definitions**
 - 1.1** Valid Alarm is an alarm signal which has been activated for the purpose for which it was installed such as: warning of an attempted or completed criminal offence, or an emergency in relation to the premise in which the alarm device or system is installed.
 - 1.2** At Fault False Alarm is any alarm signal activated unnecessarily, carelessly, improperly, or for a purpose other than that for which the alarm device or system is installed and includes:
 - 1.2.1** testing of an alarm without prior notification and approval of the officer-in-charge of the Wellington County OPP;
 - 1.2.2** an alarm reporting an attempted or completed criminal offence or an emergency situation occurring on or in relation to the premise in which the alarm device or system is installed where no evidence exists that any such event took place;
 - 1.2.3** an alarm actually or apparently activated by mechanical failure, malfunction or faulty equipment; or,
 - 1.2.4** an alarm activated by subscriber or owner negligence or carelessness.

- 1.3 No Fault False Alarm is an alarm that prompts a police response to a premise where an emergency does not exist and the alarm was triggered by natural causes or conditions beyond the control of the alarm user including, but not limited to, an alarm actually or apparently activated by atmospheric conditions, excessive vibrations or extended power failure.
- 1.4 Normal Business Hours is the period during which any premise is open for business and includes one hour prior to opening and one hour after closing.
- 1.5 Verification occurs when an alarm company or monitoring agency establishes whether a police response is required by first contacting their subscriber to confirm, when possible, if the alarm is genuine.
- 1.6 Approved alarm monitoring station(s) or alarm company(ies) is one which meets the satisfaction of the Wellington County OPP Alarm Coordinator as being *bona fide*.
- 1.7 Alarm holder is the person or persons who is recorded with the alarm company or monitoring agency as being the owner or operator of an alarm system.

2.0 Alarm Verification

- 2.1 Verification is required for all intrusion alarms or alarms to automatic banking machines which occur during the normal business hours of the premise involved. The alarm monitoring station is responsible for verifying these types of alarms.

Verification may also be requested by the officer dispatched to an alarm or the Officer-In-Charge of the Wellington County OPP when;

- 2.1.1 an intrusion alarm is activated in a building during normal business hours or when it is reasonably expected that authorized persons are or should be in the building in question;
- 2.1.2 when the same alarm is activated more than once during the officer's tour of duty and the alarm is obviously malfunctioning, or;
- 2.1.3 when several alarms are activated within a short period of time during an electrical storm or a power failure.

3.0 Registration

- 3.1 The Alarm Coordinator shall compile an alarm list of the alarm holders and the property owners of alarm systems which cause or have caused At Fault False Alarms, for statistical, policy and billing purposes.
- 3.2 Upon request, alarm companies or monitoring agencies shall provide to the Alarm Coordinator the name and address and other reasonable information relating to alarm holders and property owners as may be required for the purposes of this policy.

4.0 Automatic Dialing Alarms

- 4.1** Automatic Dialing Alarms causing At Fault False Alarms requiring response by the Wellington County OPP shall be subject to the fees set out in Section 5.0 Fees for False Alarms.

5.0 Fees for False Alarms

- 5.1** The alarm holder and the registered title owner of a property containing an alarm system which causes an At Fault False Alarm and a response or responses by the Wellington County OPP shall be jointly and severally liable to pay to the Corporation of the County of Wellington as set in the User fee By-law:

6.0 Appeal Procedure

- 6.1** Alarm holders may appeal in writing only to the Alarm Coordinator for a written decision waiving a fee if:

- 6.1.1** the alarm holder can satisfy the attending OPP officers that the system was malfunctioning during the false alarm attended by them;
- 6.1.2** the alarm holder can satisfy the Alarm Coordinator that the system was malfunctioning during one or more of the false alarms attended by the police, and;
- 6.1.3** the alarm holder can demonstrate in writing signed by an approved alarm monitoring station or alarm company that significant corrective action was taken to repair or replace a faulty or inadequate alarm system and;
- 6.1.4** the alarm holder must submit the appeal within 30 days of the invoice date.

- 6.2** An appeal by an alarm holder or the registered title owner of a property containing an alarm system, or the Wellington County OPP from a decision of the Alarm Coordinator lies to the Wellington County OPP Detachment Board (the Board). The appeal may be in writing or in person at a regularly scheduled Board meeting, provided the appeal is commenced by notice, in writing, within 30 days of the decision of the Alarm Coordinator. The decision of the Board shall be final.

7.0 Collection as Taxes

- 7.1** Fees not paid from which no appeal has been commenced within the applicable time shall be added to the tax roll in accordance with the terms of Section 398 of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25.

8.0 Public Notice

- 8.1** Annually, and more frequently if required by the Board, the Alarm Coordinator will ensure a public notice of Board By-law 1-24 and the terms of the At Fault False Alarm Reduction Policy. The public notice may take the form of newspaper advertising, or website posting, or tax bill inserts, or any combination of the three.