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Private Alarm Systems Task Force Holds Public Hearing

Panel's Proposal and Draft Ordinance to be Presented

The Private Alarm Systems Task Force, a city review panel charged with examining how private alarm system providers operate and how they're currently regulated, will report on its findings and present a draft ordinance for review **tomorrow, Thursday, July 8, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. in room 301-A, City Hall.**

Alderman Robert W. Puente, chair of the task force, said the panel was formed at the behest of Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr. after it became apparent late last year that some private alarm companies holding city licenses were using coercive, deceptive, and unfair sales practices, and in some cases were promising customers that Milwaukee police would respond to alarm calls – a false promise because police do not respond to such calls.

“We think there are improvements to be made to our regulations and that we can outline what can and cannot be done when alarm companies are disclosing sales, installation and services,” said Alderman Puente. “The ultimate goal was to suggest improvements that will better protect our citizens who are relying on the companies for safety and security.”

Among the changes proposed in the draft ordinance are clarifications of sales staff and their training needs as well as requirements for alarm firms to present detailed plans of operation and local business staff contacts. The task force is also proposing a new electrical license type be created for burglar and security alarm installers.

“I want to thank the members of the task force,” Alderman Puente said. “Their hard work and thoughtful analysis of the relationship between security providers and our public safety and licensing needs has generated some excellent suggestions for improvement.”

The report will be presented at Thursday's public hearing, and the communication will return to the control of the Public Safety Committee for any further action. The public is invited to attend the hearing.