

## Your rights and responsibilities as an alarm user



### Your rights as an alarm user include that:

- Your alarm system is sold, installed and monitored by reputable businesses licensed by the City.
- Persons and conditions on the premises do not result in inadvertent alarm activation.
- Alarm systems are repaired or replaced when defects result in unintended alarm activation.



### Your responsibilities as an alarm user include assuring that:

- Your alarm system is sold, installed and monitored by reputable businesses licensed by the City.
- Persons and conditions on the premises do not result in inadvertent alarm activation.
- Alarm systems are repaired or replaced when defects result in unintended alarm activation.

## Important Contact Information

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The License Division of the City Clerk may be contacted at (414) 286-2238 if you have questions, concerns or complaints about private alarm system sales practices.

For alarm business licensing information, please visit:  
[www.milwaukee.gov/license](http://www.milwaukee.gov/license).

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The Department of Neighborhood Services, Electrical and Elevator Division, may be contacted at (414) 286-2532 if you have questions, concerns or complaints about installation contractor licensing and permitting.

For further information, please visit:  
[www.milwaukee.gov/electrical](http://www.milwaukee.gov/electrical).

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For information about your rights as a private alarm system consumer and about possible unfair, deceptive, false, misleading and other unlawful business practices, you may contact the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection at Consumer Protection Hotline, (800) 422-7128, or visit:  
[http://datcp.wi.gov/Consumer/Consumer\\_Complaints](http://datcp.wi.gov/Consumer/Consumer_Complaints).

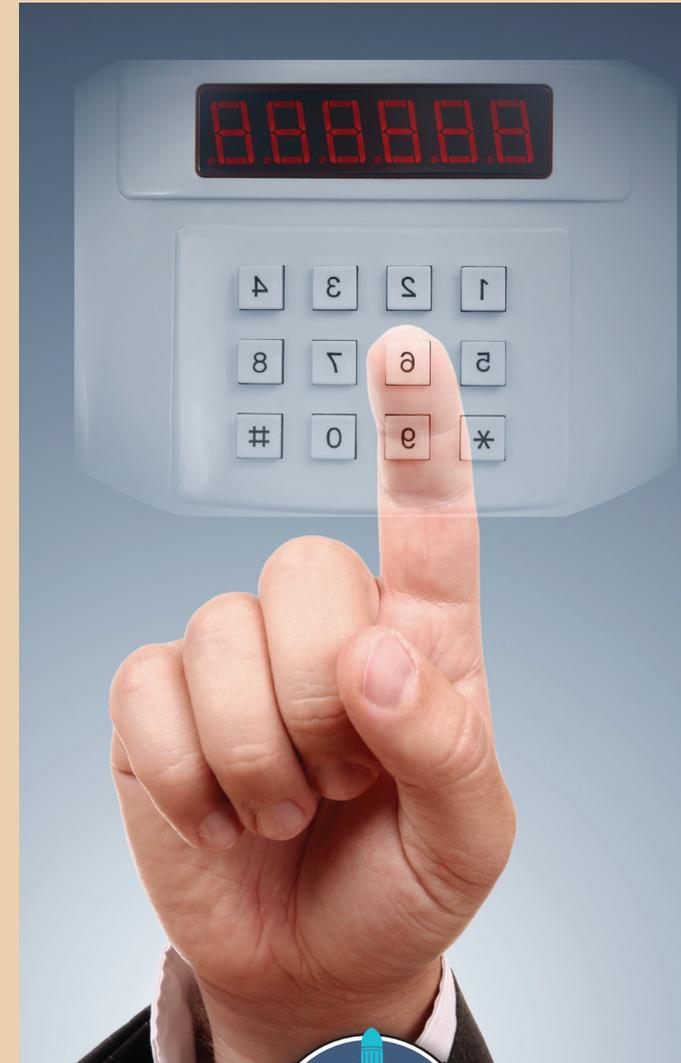
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Section 105-75 of the City of Milwaukee Code of Ordinances regulates private alarm systems and may be accessed at: [www.milwaukee.gov/tableofcontents](http://www.milwaukee.gov/tableofcontents).

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## Private Alarm System Users' Rights and Responsibilities



## What private alarm system customers need to know

The City of Milwaukee regulates private alarm system sales, installation and operation. These regulations are in addition to consumer protections provided by the State of Wisconsin.

One of the most important functions of City government is to assure the safety and security of its residents. The responsible and effective use of private alarm systems by residents and businesses contributes to the safety and security of the entire community.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to provide you with basic information about your rights and responsibilities as a private alarm system customer and user. Contact information is also provided if you have questions or encounter problems in the sales, installation and operation of private alarm systems.

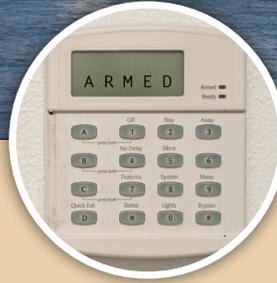
## Private alarm sales

All alarm businesses operating in the City must be licensed. Any business engaged in alarm system sales activities, including equipment leasing, must also have a sales license.

Each licensed alarm business must file an application and plan of operation with the City Clerk that includes information identifying managers or supervisors with oversight of alarm systems sales, installation, monitoring and first responder services. A first responder is someone who personally verifies that there is a valid cause for alarm before the police may be contacted.

Each person engaged in alarm systems sales activities must be employed by a licensed business and registered with the City Clerk. Sales personnel must display photo-identification including the name of the alarm sales business. Sales personnel are required to have 14 hours of training unless accompanied by other trained salespersons.

All contracts for the sale or lease of a private alarm system must be written in plain language with key provisions highlighted in bold. Consumer sales contracts are subject to state requirements. The City is not authorized to modify or set aside a private alarm system contract. Therefore, it is important to make sure that you understand the contract before signing. This includes understanding who will be responsible for installing and maintaining the system, who will be responsible for monitoring the system, and who will be responsible for responding to an activated alarm.



## Installation of private alarm systems

All electrical installation contractors, including those installing low-voltage alarm systems, must be licensed by the Department of Neighborhood Services (DNS). Each private alarm system installation also requires a permit from DNS. License and permit requirements are designed to assure that systems are installed effectively and in a manner that will reduce unintended activation of alarms and reduce the risk of false alarms.

Private alarm system customers are urged to make sure that systems are installed under license and permit.

## First responder services

Most private alarm users contract for monitoring and responder services. Automated calls to the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) are prohibited. A police response to an activated alarm will only be made if a cause for alarm is verified. Alarm businesses that make unverified calls for service to MPD are subject to fine.

Private alarm users are urged to determine if their first responder service guarantees "prompt dispatch." Prompt response means that someone will arrive to verify the alarm within 30 minutes of activation. If your responder service offers "prompt dispatch"

and fails to arrive within 30 minutes without cause, a complaint may be filed with the City Clerk. Other recourse may also be available under your alarm contract.

## False alarms

If the police or fire agencies are summoned to a location after notification of an alarm and find no indication of burglary, attempted burglary, robbery, attempted robbery or a fire, then the alarm may be determined to be a false alarm. False alarms are prohibited by law. Exceptions may be made due to extraordinary conditions of weather or to electrical disturbances.

False alarms are often the result of carelessness and may be caused by the activities of maintenance, repair or remodeling personnel who are not aware of the alarm system or are unfamiliar with alarm deactivation procedures.

If an alarm user is responsible for more than 2 false alarms in a calendar year, then the alarm user is subject to forfeiture penalties between \$50 and \$100 for an additional false alarm, plus costs, and subject to penalties of between \$100 and \$250, plus costs for any subsequent false alarm without regard to the year in which the alarm occurs.