



CREATING POSITIVE CHANGE

RECOMMENDATION SUBMISSION FORM

CPC Area Command: Southwest

	A: Reviewing and assessing the propriety and effectiveness of law enforcement priorities and related community policing strategies, materials & training.
	B: Reviewing and assessing concerns or recommendations about specific APD policing tactics & initiatives.
	C: Providing information to the community and conveying feedback from the community
	D: Advising the Chief on recruiting a diverse work force
	E: Advising the Chief on ways to collect and publicly disseminate data and information including information about APD compliance with the CASA in a transparent and public friendly format.

DATE SUBMITTED: July 13th, 2017 Seven (7) business days after submission

RECEIPT DUE: _____ Twenty (20) business days after submission¹

APD RESPONSE DUE: _____ Sixty (60) business days after submission

RATIONALE:

To address time Albuquerque Police Department (APD) spends on false alarms The intent of this recommendation is to assist APD to utilize officer time more efficiently. The time police officers **DO NOT** respond to false alarms may be spent in crime prevention.

Police work is inherently dangerous, and often police officers are called on to act as” untrained and temporary social workers, vets (with injured animals), mental welfare officers, marriage guidance counsellors, welfare officers, accommodation officers, child care officers, home-help to

¹ Revised April 2017

the infirm, and also as confident and counsellor to people alone and in need of guidance” (Punch, 1979 as cited in Millie & Bullock, 2013, p. 134). Conventional wisdom says that alarms would reduce crime, improve the quality of life in neighborhoods and be cost effective. Advocates for police responding to alarms and business argue that if a subject knows the police will not respond, the chance of being burglarized increases. Research on false alarms is, at best scant. Per Petrocelli, (2008) in 2002 “American police responded to 36 million alarm calls, costing \$1.8 million” (para. 2). The problem is likely to get worse. In a 16-year period the Arlington, Texas police department experienced a 494 percent increase in residential alarms and a 186 increase in commercial alarms – 99 percent of these alarms were false.

There is evidence the alarms are counter-productive. In a preliminary study, Tilley, Thompson, Farrell, Grove & Tseloni (2015) found “that alarms have become associated with increased rather than decreased risk of burglary with entry” (p. 1).

Reducing false alarms not only frees up police officers to do other duties, the cost to citizens can be substantial. According to Schaenman, Horvath and Hatry (2012) “Reducing false alarms typically saves on the order of 40 minutes of officer time per false alarm averted. This translates to the equivalent of about \$50-\$120 per false call averted in personnel time, fuel and vehicle wear and tear” (p.3).

Community policing, by design, calls for community involvement, improved citizen relationships between police agencies, and a reduction in crime. Alarm companies are called on to “do their part.” Alarm companies are called on to verify the validity of alarms, before police are dispatched to alarms.

In the spirit of community policing, the Southwest Citizen Policing Council, is advocating for some updated/new police in police response to alarms.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Police do **NOT** send a patrol unit(s) to residential or commercial alarms without verification of the validity of the alarm. Exception to this would be financial institutions (i.e. Banks/Credit Unions) and panic alarms.
2. Police work with residents and business owners to be proactive, rather than reactive. In other words, reduce false alarms, while increasing security for personal safety and protection of property.
3. The city continues to require permits for the installation of alarms (both residential and commercial). Although they may want to reexamine the cost of the permit. These fees would adequately cover the cost when police are dispatched to alarms.

References

Millie, A. & Bullock, L. (2015). Policing in a time of contradiction and constraint: Reimagining the role and function of contemporary policing. *Criminology and criminal justice* 13(2), 133-142. DOI: 10.1177/1748895812474284

Petrocelli, J. (June 1st, 2008). False burglar alarms *Police magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.policemag.com/channel/patrol/articles/2008/false-burglar-alarms.aspx>

Schaenman, P., Horvath, A., & Hatry, H. (2012). Opportunities for police cost savings without sacrificing service quality: Reducing false alarms. Urban Institute, Washington, DC. Publisher

Tilly, N. Thompson, R., Farrell, G., & Tseloni, A. (2015). Do burglar alarms increase burglary risk? A counter-institutive finding and possible explanation. *Crime & prevention & community safety* 17(1), 1-19.

The above is what I had drafted to spark some discussion.... Don Burns (a citizen that regularly attends the SWCPC had some thoughts, I added them below.