Title: "At Fault" False Alarm Reduction Policy

Policy No: 2601

Approval: Town Council
Effective Date: May 12th, 2015
Revised:

Policy Statement: In order to deter "at fault" false alarms the Town of Hardisty is implementing an "At Fault" False Alarm Reduction Policy. Many "at fault" false alarms are due to the activation of alarm systems in businesses and residences. These security systems can be activated through faulty equipment or human error. In order to reduce these types of calls there will an issuing of fee invoices to the property owners of these premises when an "at fault" false alarm occurs.

Purpose: To establish the invoicing of false alarm call outs.

Intent

- To reduce "at fault" false alarm call outs that engage our emergency service providers (Fire & Rescue Dept., Police, Ambulance) activated by alarm systems.
- False alarms can use up our emergency services responder's time and create a nuisance to emergency agencies and their employees.
- False alarms create undue costs to all levels of government which lead to valuable resources being spent inappropriately and should therefore be recovered financially.
- To provide a one-time cost relief to a property owner when an "at fault" false alarm occurs.

Definitions

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 situation in relation to the premise in which the alarm device or system is installed.

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:

   a. Testing of an alarm without prior notification and approval from the proper emergency service dept. or 911 call center.

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b. 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 and whereas there is no evidence existing that any such event took place;
c. An alarm actually or apparently activated by mechanical failure, malfunction or faulty equipment; or
d. An alarm activated by subscriber or owner negligence or carelessness.
e. An alarm that prompts an emergency services responder 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.

3. "Verification" occurs when an alarm company or monitoring agency establishes whether or not an emergency responder is required by first contacting their subscriber to confirm, when possible, if the alarm is genuine.

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.

4. "Approved alarm monitoring station(s) or alarm company(ies)" is one which meets the satisfaction of the Town of Hardisty by obtaining a Town of Hardisty Business License.

5. "Alarm holder" is the person or persons who are recorded as the contacts for that premise where the alarm is located.

6. Town of Hardisty Master Rates Bylaw #1155/10 as amended – referred to in this document as the Master Rates Bylaw.

(A) Alarm Verification Requirements

a. Verification is required for all emergency response alarms completed by an automatic dialing alarm system related to a commercial entity during normal business hours of the premise involved. The alarm monitoring station is responsible for verifying these types of alarms.

b. When the same alarm is activated more than once in a short period of time during an electrical storm or a power failure or when there is an obvious malfunctioning of the equipment verification is required for both a commercial and residential premise.

(B) Fees for False Alarms

a. The alarm holder and the registered title owner of a property containing an alarm system which causes an "At Fault" False Alarm shall be jointly and severally liable to pay to the municipal corporation, Town of Hardisty, the

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fees as set out in the Master Rate Bylaw in effect at the time of the occurrence.

b. Flat Fee for the first offence of an "at fault" false alarm as set out in the Master Rates Bylaw per registered property owner.

c. Second and subsequent "at fault" false alarms to the property owner shall be charged out at a full response callout pursuant to the Town of Hardisty Master Rates Bylaw including charges relating to response of any mutual aid responders and equipment as set out in the All Hazzards Mutual Aid Agreement in effect at the time of callout agreed to by the Town of Hardisty.

d. In the case of chronic "at fault" false alarm system owners, where four or more responses within a twelve month period occur, the Town of Hardisty bylaw officer, or CAO may at their discretion enforce the revocation of a business license for that alarm company.

(C) Collection as Taxes

Fees not paid (uncollectable) from outstanding invoices pursuant to the Town of Hardisty Accounts Receivable Collection Policy #1503 as revised, which resulted in charges from "at fault" false alarms will be applied to the property owner's tax roll in accordance with the terms of the Municipal Government Act RSA 2000 Chpt M-26 Div. 4 Sec. 553 as consolidated or amended.

Approved by Council May 12, 2015 - Motion # 68/15

Sandy Otto – CAO