



April 22, 2010

NOTICE

Dear El Cerrito Resident/Business Owner:

You have received this letter because the City of El Cerrito has obtained information that you have a security alarm installed on your property. If you do not have an alarm installed, you may disregard this message.

Early this year, the El Cerrito City Council discussed the issue of false alarms in the City. False alarms—alarms that are triggered although no emergency exists—are costly to the City. The El Cerrito Police Department reports that 1,600 alarm responses each year are the result of a false alarm, taking valuable police resources off the street.

The City Council responded by passing an ordinance that requires residences and businesses to pay a fine when an excess number of false alarms are triggered. It also requires residences and businesses with alarms to register with the City and obtain an alarm permit. The intent of this law is to reduce the number of false alarms in the City, allowing the Police Department to better use its resources where it matters most.

Please note that alarms WILL BE RESPONDED TO by the Police Department, and there is no fee for Police response to alarms triggered by criminal activity. However, if multiple false alarms occur at a property in one year, the property owner will be subject to a fine.

Residences and businesses with alarms installed need to know the following:

- The new law goes into effect July 3, 2010.
- Repeated false alarms will be subject to a fine. For 2010, there will be no charge for the first two false alarms. However, if three to five false alarms occur, the fine will be \$74.00 for each occurrence. Six or more false alarms in one year will be charged \$158.00 each (with a maximum of \$500.00 per day).
- Starting in 2011, the City will also charge for the second false alarm.

- The cost of an alarm permit is \$26.00 every two years. The fine for operating an alarm without a permit is \$100.00 in addition to any false alarm fines. This fine will be waived if an Alarm User Permit is completed 10 (ten) business days from the date of a warning letter received from the El Cerrito Police Department during 2010.
- If you receive a letter advising of false alarm(s) at your residence or business and you feel it should not be considered a false alarm(s), you must submit your protest in writing within fifteen (15) days after the receipt of the letter to: El Cerrito Police Department, Attention: Alarm Administrator, 10900 San Pablo Avenue El Cerrito, CA 94530.

You can read the full text of the Alarm Ordinance on the City's website at www.el-cerrito.org/police/alarms.html or you may come to the Police Department at 10900 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA to obtain a written copy.

Enclosed please find the form necessary to obtain an alarm permit. Please fill out this form and send it with a check for payment to: El Cerrito Police Department, Attention Alarm Administrator, 10900 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, CA 94530. This form is also available on the City's website at www.el-cerrito.org/police/alarms.html.

Should you have any questions, please contact Lt. Robert De La Campa at (510) 215-4415 or by email at rdelacampa@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Thank you,

Scott C. Kirkland
Chief of Police



Lieutenant Robert De La Campa
El Cerrito Police Department

Administrative Services Division
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Office (510) 215-4415