



PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Prevent False Alarms This Holiday Season

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA . . . Don't let your holiday season be ruined by false alarms! There are simple steps that you can take to avoid what could be costly mistakes, while at the same time creating a lovely holiday atmosphere in your home or business.

Motion Detectors and Holiday Decorations

- Always ensure that hanging or moving decorations will not activate motion detectors, especially when heating systems come on.
- If you don't know the location of your motion detectors, or the area they cover, contact your alarm company for assistance. They should be able to tell you what your motion sensors "see" and you will be better able to avoid potential false alarms.
- Once your decorations have been placed, inspect everything to make sure they do not interfere with any window or door contacts for your alarm system.
- Firmly secure outdoor lights around doors and windows so that they will not activate glass break detectors in the event of winds or storms.
- Check doors and windows for cracks or a loose fit in the frame, as inclement weather and wind gusts during the winter season could cause false alarms.
- If your doors and windows are loose, coordinate their repair with your alarm company to avoid unnecessary false alarms.

Family, Friends, Temporary Users and Holiday Travel

The holiday season provides an opportunity for family and friends to visit. Children are home from college or military service. Statistics indicate that false alarm calls increase during this time. To prevent this from occurring:

- Ensure that everyone with a key to your home or business knows how to properly operate your alarm system.
- Retrain your college students and others who have been away from home on the use of your alarm system, and remind them of the pass code and password.
- Instruct everyone with access to your home or business on the appropriate procedures for cancelling law enforcement response should a false alarm occur.
- Advise your alarm company if you will be out of town and provide them with phone numbers to contact you in the event of an alarm activation.

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Family, Friends, Temporary Users and Holiday Travel (continued)

- If you have a house-sitter, ensure that this person knows how to operate the alarm system and cancel a dispatch, and make sure he or she has been provided with temporary passwords. Inform your alarm company of those temporary passwords and contact numbers for the house-sitters.

**With everyone's help, you can make this a safe, happy,
and false-alarm-free holiday season!**

For more information, or to register your alarm system with the Prince William County Police Department, please call the False Alarm Reduction Unit at 703-792-6687 or 703-792-7281.

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