

NEWSROOM

Calgary, AB, 26 April 2016

Phased-In Changes to City of Calgary Alarm Bylaw 31M95 and CPS Dispatch Criteria

The Calgary Police Service recently approved a phased-in approach to revise the current Alarm Services Bylaw and how and when officers respond to alarm calls. Public safety is paramount to the Calgary Police Service; these changes will facilitate an improved service to permit holders and licensed alarm agencies.

Police currently respond to approximately 45 alarm calls each day. Of these calls, 96 per cent are deemed to be false alarms. It takes significant police resources to clear a call as a false alarm. These changes allow CPS to respond to legitimate public safety concern calls for service.

Changes to the dispatch criteria will make for more efficient use of police resources and will better align Calgary with models for how alarm calls are responded to by other police services in major centres across Canada and North America.

All calls for service involving panic, hold-up or duress alarms, and any **verified valid alarm activations will still be attended to by police.**

Effective May 15, 2016, Calgary 9-1-1 will no longer dispatch alarm calls where only one zone has been activated within a premise. Alarm agencies will also be required to contact two key holders prior to contacting police.

A second phase will be brought in during the second half of 2016, where Calgary 9-1-1 will no longer dispatch police to locations where there is no valid alarm permit for the premise, the permit is suspended, the call is within 14 days of an alarm installation, or the alarm agency is not properly licensed. Police will also no longer be dispatched to commercial premises during regular business hours.

The Calgary Police Service will also begin charging a nominal fee for alarm system permits.

Recommendations will be presented to City of Calgary Council regarding changes to the false alarm penalty structure associated with recurrent false alarms. These measures will recover costs related to alarm bylaw administration and align with practices in other major jurisdictions.

Without having to respond to false alarms, members of the Calgary Police Service will be available to respond to other calls. Police anticipate that Calgary will see improved call response times, with a focus on responses to valid alarm activations and priority calls, with no increased risk to the public.