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## **VERIFIED RESPONSE WILL REDUCE 911 CALLS FOR FALSE ALARMS**

The Detroit Police Department will implement a new practice titled “Verification Response”, which will go into effect on August 22, 2011, stated Chief Ralph L. Godbee, Jr.

Over 98% of the alarms that Detroit Police Department (“DPD”) Officers respond to are false. In light of this fact, DPD will require a “verified response” from alarm companies, before sending officers to the location of the alarm. This policy will take effect on August 22, 2011.

A verified response means that an alarm company verifies that an alarm is one of the 2% of true alarms, before contacting DPD. Once the alarm company verifies the alarm, DPD will dispatch officers to the location.

DPD reviewed calls for service and determined that false alarms have the greatest financial and staffing impact of any class of calls. As more and more cities and police departments face limited resources and budget cuts, a logical area of reduction is unproductive calls for service; that being alarm responses, which are consistently 98% false nationally.

Verification of burglar alarms ensures police officers are dispatched to true crimes, emergencies, and reports of suspicious behavior. Benefits of verified response include:

1. Significant time savings for police, allowing more time for preventative policing activities (e.g., visibility on patrol, community relations)
2. Freeing police officers to respond to higher priority emergency calls,
3. Reduction of calls to the 911 system, improving operator availability and answer time

A report published by the United States Department of Justice, recognized verified response as a **best practice** toward eliminating waste and improving police service. Since 1991, approximately 30 police departments in the U.S. and Canada, have adopted verified response and proven the model’s effectiveness.

Research showed that initial concerns expressed by citizens and the alarm industry that burglary rates would spike as a result of verified response were unwarranted. Data from cities requiring a verified response before dispatching officers shows no clear trend for an increase in burglaries after implementation.

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Many police departments require alarm companies to verify alarms before dispatching officers. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department first implemented verified response in 1991. They continue to practice it today, and many other departments have followed their lead. Cites requiring Verified Response include:

Salt Lake City, UT Population: 184,000	Implemented Dec.1, 2000
Milwaukee, WI Population: 629,296	Implemented Sept. 18, 2004
Aurora, CO Population: 222,103	Implemented Dec. 1, 2004
Fremont, CA Population: 200,000	Implemented March 20, 2005
Madison, WI Population: 233,209	Implemented Jan. 1, 2007

Alarm Monitoring Companies verify an alarm by:

- Having a representative of the Alarm Company go to the premises and verify that DPD needs to respond to the alarm.
- Having the property owner or employee of the property owner go to the premises and verify that DPD needs to respond to the alarm.
- Remote observation of the building using audio/visual monitoring to verify that DPD needs to respond to the alarm. The audio or visual system must capture the intrusion for review by DPD and/or Prosecuting Attorney staff.
- Recording multiple alarm trips. An example would be activation of a window alarm followed by activation of a motion detector alarm inside of the building.

DPD will continue to respond to human activated alarms, including hold-up, panic, or duress.

The Verified Response Initiative is the second phase used to reduce false alarms. On December 1, 2010, the Department implemented the Enhanced Call Verification (ECV) program, which contributed to a 29% overall reduction in false alarms. Verified Response will further reduce false alarms, improving response time to crimes and other emergencies. The Verified Response Initiative will provide more police visibility, while still protecting schools, churches, businesses and citizens.

The Department will continue to explore other best practices, such as an amendment to the alarm ordinance, to further reduce false alarm calls for service.

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*For additional information, please contact the Office of Public Information at 313-596-2200.*