

**PALM BEACH COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

RIC L. BRADSHAW, SHERIFF



CAPTAIN TODD BAER
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Dear City of Lake Worth residents and Business Owners:

As the Commander of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBSO) District 14 Substation, I have important information to share with you regarding your burglar alarm. On October 1, 2008, the City of Lake Worth adopted Palm Beach County Alarm Ordinance 2008-038. The new city alarm ordinance provides that PBSO will enforce the Palm Beach County Alarm Ordinance within the City of Lake Worth (the "City") since the City has contracted with PBSO law enforcement services.

"Why is this a big deal and how will it effect me?"

Last year alone, the deputies/officers in District 14 (the City of Lake Worth) responded to hundreds of false alarms. In most cases, the alarms were set off due to human error, poorly working alarms, and for other reasons that could have been easily avoided. In each case, deputies/officers from PBSO/LWPD responded to the false alarms over and over again when they could have been patrolling, conducting traffic enforcement, or responding to high priority calls. **Studies have suggested that more than 97% of all alarm activations are false alarms** and the ordinance was enacted by the County (and now adopted by the city) in an effort to reduce unnecessary law enforcement responses to false alarm activations.

In addition, the ordinance encourages alarm users to repair defective alarm systems and to properly learn how to use them. This is accomplished by providing a fine schedule that assesses fines to users who continuously allow false alarm activations at their premises.

"How much are the fines?"

The following fines are assessed under the alarm ordinance:

1. The first and second false alarm shall not be assessed a fine.
2. The third and fourth false alarm shall each be assessed a \$50 fine.
3. The fifth false alarm shall be assessed a \$75 fine.
4. The sixth through ninth false alarm shall each be assessed a \$100 fine.
5. The tenth and all subsequent false alarms shall each be assessed a \$500 fine.

In addition, alarm activation from an alarm system that has not been registered is subject to a civil penalty of \$260.00 for each activation, so it is imperative that all residents and businesses register their alarm system in compliance with the ordinance.

“How do I register my alarm?”

The registration process is quite simple and can be accomplished by one of two ways. First, you can mail an **Alarm Permit Application** and a **twenty-five dollar (\$25.00) check** to PBSO. Please log onto www.pbsso.org to review the alarm ordinance in its entirety and *download* an Alarm Permit Application.

Secondly, you may obtain these documents at our district office which is located at: **PBSO- District 14, 120 North “G” Street, Lake Worth, Florida 33460**. You can mail the application and check to: **Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office, c/o Accounting Department, P.O. Box 24681, West Palm Beach, Florida 33416-4681**; please make the \$25.00 check payable to PBSO.

Please understand that PBSO will not respond to alarms that are not properly permitted after the October 1, 2009 deadline. *(However, PBSO will always respond to all robbery/panic duress and hold up alarms because these alarms require an affirmative act by a person on the premise to activate.)*

In closing, please know that all revenue received by the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office for permit applications fees, renewal fees and fines less administrative costs, are returned to the City. If you have any questions, please contact the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Alarm Unit, Monday – Friday, from 8am to 5pm, at 561-688-3695.

Sincerely,

Captain Todd Baer
Commander, District 14 – City of Lake Worth