

**CITY OF TEMECULA  
AGENDA REPORT**

**TO:** City Manager/City Council

**FROM:** Lisa McConnell, Police Chief  
Jodie Gray, Fire Chief

**DATE:** June 11, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Introduce Public Safety Alarm Systems Ordinance and Adopt Related Fee Resolution (At the Request of Council Member Rahn)

---

**PREPARED BY:** Elsa Wigle, Assistant Fire Marshal  
Wendy Miller, Administrative Assistant

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the City Council:

1. Introduce and read by title only an ordinance entitled:

**ORDINANCE NO. 19 –**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY  
OF TEMECULA ADDING CHAPTER 9.60 TO THE  
TEMECULA MUNICIPAL CODE ESTABLISHING  
REGULATIONS FOR THE OPERATIONS OF PUBLIC  
SAFETY ALARM SYSTEMS**

2. Adopt a resolution entitled:

**RESOLUTION NO. 19-**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY  
OF TEMECULA ESTABLISHING PUBLIC SAFETY FALSE  
ALARM RESPONSE FEES**

**SUMMARY OF**

**ORDINANCE:** The purpose of this Chapter is to (i) set forth regulations governing burglary, robbery, fire and medical assistance alarm systems within the City of Temecula; (ii) reduce false alarms; and (iii) authorize false alarm fees.

**BACKGROUND:** The City of Temecula Police and Fire Department collectively responded to over 10,000 alarm calls from January 1, 2017 to March 1, 2019. After reviewing these calls, staff recognized that a large percentage of these calls were determined to be false alarms and did not require an emergency response. A false alarm can be caused by a few different reasons such as faulty/malfunctioning equipment, user error, poor installation or the lack of

maintenance to the alarm system equipment. Once an alarm is triggered, the alarm company notifies dispatch to report the activation. Each alarm activation requires an emergency response from either police or fire or both agencies depending on the type of alarm activation. The false alarm calls create a burden on the already limited police and fire resources, which could ultimately lead to longer response times to other legitimate crimes, fires, and/or emergency medical service calls.

Over the last year, the Fire Department has introduced their annual inspection program and have been actively inspecting schools, commercial businesses, restaurants, hotels, apartments and multi-family complexes. These inspections will help identify faulty and malfunctioning alarm systems, but this will not completely resolve the problems with businesses that continue to have false alarm activations. The fire stations are also working with the annual inspection program to identify the properties that have any false alarm activations. Once the station determines the call is a false alarm they report the address of the property to the annual inspectors. The inspectors will then visit the property to investigate the cause of the false alarm activation. While both of these mechanisms are helping to identify issues causing false alarm calls, there are still businesses that continue to produce repeat false alarm calls. In the past year the fire prevention department has addressed 108 false alarms with commercial businesses that had repetitive false alarms.

Per Council's direction, the Police and Fire Departments have analyzed the false alarm data and have determined there is a significant cost associated with responding to false alarms. The average time spent responding to and handling a false alarm varies between 30 minutes and one hour, occasionally longer depending on the incident type. With the City's 4-0 staffing model on each engine, this equates to roughly \$375.00 per hour in costs responding to each false alarm. It is impossible to quantify the impact to response times to true emergency calls. Therefore, Fire and Police are recommending the City Council adopt the attached false alarm ordinance that outlines and identifies the definition of a "false alarm", and determines how fees will be structured for the false alarms. The resolution outlines the incremental increase in fees beginning with a no fee notice to comply, escalating to a maximum of \$250 per occurrence based on the number of false alarm calls received from the same location.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The accompanying Fee Resolution will allow the City to recover a portion of the costs associated with responding to false alarm calls by Police and Fire.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Ordinance
2. Resolution