

**PALM BEACH COUNTY**  
**SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

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Dear City of Lake Worth Residents and Business Owners:

As the Commander of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office - District 14 – Lake Worth Substation, I have important information to share with you regarding your burglar alarm system. On December 2, 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 for all law enforcement services.

**"How does that affect you?"**

Although the new ordinance became effective December 12, 2008, the City's residents and business owners were granted a *temporary reprieve*, in part, because the new ordinance will require residents and business owners to register their burglar alarm systems with the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Alarm Unit. Please note, however, that enforcement of the Alarm Ordinance will begin on **October 1, 2009**.

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

Studies have suggested that more than 97% of all alarm activations are false alarms. Last year alone, the deputies/officers in District 14 - 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 responded to the false alarms over and over again when they could have otherwise been patrolling, conducting traffic enforcement, or responding to high priority calls.

The Alarm Ordinance was created to serve two primary purposes: 1) to reduce unnecessary law enforcement responses to false alarm activations and 2) to encourage 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 alarms shall NOT be assessed fines.
2. The third and fourth false alarms shall each be assessed a \$50 fine.
3. The fifth false alarm shall be assessed a \$75 fine.
4. The sixth through ninth false alarms shall each be assessed a \$100 fine.
5. The tenth and all subsequent false alarms shall each be assessed a \$500 fine.

In addition, an alarm activation from an alarm system that has not been registered is subject to a civil penalty of \$260 for each activation, so it is imperative that all residents and business owners register their alarm systems in compliance with the new Ordinance.

### **"How do I register my alarm?"**

The registration process is quite simple. You may log onto [www.pbso.org](http://www.pbso.org) then click on Alarm Application (Under the Sheriff's picture) to review the Alarm Ordinance in its entirety and *download* an Alarm Permit Application OR you may obtain these documents at our PBSO – District 14 – Office located at **120 North G Street, Lake Worth, Florida 33460**. The completed application and a twenty-five dollar (\$25) check payable to PBSO should be mailed to **Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, C/O Accounting Department, P.O. Box 24681, West Palm Beach, Florida 33416-4681**.

In closing, 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 premises to activate.)* Also, 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 8 AM to 5 PM, at 561-688-3695.

Sincerely,

Captain Rolando Silva  
Commander  
PBSO - District 14 – City of Lake Worth

RS/ahs