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| ***REPLACE WITH YOUR MASTHEAD*** |
| **VFIS logo black JPG** | **SOG Title:** |
| **SOG Number:** |
| **Original Date:** | **Revision Date:** |
| **ABC Fire Department General Operating Guideline** |

**Automatic Fire Alarms**

***This is a sample of a standard operating guideline (SOG) on this topic. You should review the content, modify as appropriate for your organization, have it reviewed by your leadership team and if appropriate your legal counsel. Once adopted, make sure the SOG is communicated to members, implemented and performance monitored for effective implementation.***

**Purpose:**

To establish procedures and guidelines for investigating and resolving automatic fire alarms; and to provide related \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ alarm ordinance information.

A fire alarm incident can involve one or more of the following:

* smoke alarm activation
* heat detector activation
* fire detector activation
* automatic sprinkler system activation such as a water flow alarm
* manual pull station
* residential smoke alarm
* carbon monoxide detector
* other types of monitored alarms

**Procedure:**

* In the event of a dispatch to an automatic alarm, the assigned unit(s) will respond under emergency conditions until a fire officer reduces the level of response.
* Based upon the individual situation, the officer in charge can alter the response on the report of a police officer, security officer, maintenance personnel, etc. Reports from these individuals are to be used for initial size up information by the first arriving officer.
* In occupied structures, the first-in officer is to interrogate persons on scene, preferably speaking to management personnel or someone with knowledge of the alarm system. The first arriving fire officer is to examine the on-site monitoring station (i.e.; enunciator panel, fire control room) before making any determination of the validity of the alarm.
* In unoccupied structures, the first arriving officer shall ascertain as to the status of the key holder. If no key holder is responding, or if response time is greater than 15 minutes, the officer in charge shall make the determination as to whether forcible entry shall be made using the following criteria:
	+ Conduct a complete 360 degree view and size-up the property in question, if possible.
	+ Visible signs of fire or other trouble (broken pipes, etc.)
	+ Alarm history
	+ Other variable factors

In unoccupied structures where there is no key holder response, forcible entry is to be considered only if the officer in charge deems necessary.

* After it has been determined that the alarm is invalid, the officer in charge shall consult with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Police Department to determine if a citation is warranted.
* In the case of persistent nuisance alarms, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Fire Marshal's Office is to be notified and is to respond to the scene to alleviate the problem.
* In the case of persistent nuisance alarms, the officer in charge may instruct the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Communication Center to dispatch the alarm as an investigation for a period not to exceed 12 hours.

If applicable, attach the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Alarm Ordinance.

***This is a sample guideline furnished to you by VFIS. Your organization should review this guideline and make the necessary modifications to meet your organization’s needs. The intent of this guideline is to assist you in reducing exposure to the risk of injury, harm or damage to personnel, property and the general public. For additional information on this topic, contact your VFIS Risk Control representative.***

**References:**