

Professional security companies can play an integral role in helping you to understand how to best use your security system and reduce the risk of false alarms. To find a professional security company near you visit CANASA's Directory of Members at canasa.org.

Reducing false alarms benefits everyone

Contact a CANASA member company today to find out more how you can prevent false alarms. Visit canasa.org to find a security professional near you.

Established in 1977, the Canadian Security Association (CANASA) is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing the electronic security industry in Canada. We promote and protect the best interests of our members and the safety of Canadians through industry education, advocacy, and leadership.



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Canadian Security Association

How to Reduce the Risk of False Alarms

Tips for Proper use of Your Security System



False alarm prevention

Using your security system

Installing a security system can be one of the best steps you take in securing your home. However, it is extremely important to maintain proper use and care of your system. Security systems that are not installed or used correctly may result in a false alarm. A Canadian Security Association (CANASA) member company can help ensure your system is properly installed and answer any questions you have about your security system.

User error is the number one cause of false dispatches.

CANASA is the largest security association in Canada. All of CANASA's member companies adhere to a strict code of ethics, so you can be confident your security needs will be taken care of by a knowledgeable security professional.

Why should I be concerned about false alarms?

False alarms not only put unnecessary pressure on emergency response services and the authorities who manage first responder dispatches, but can result in false alarm fines for homeowners. Frequent false alarms may also impact false alarm by-laws in your region. Playing an active role in reducing false alarms can help ensure that emergency response teams will be available to respond to true emergencies when you and your community members need them most.

What are false alarms versus false dispatches?

A false alarm is an alarm that is accidentally activated and there is no true emergency situation. False alarms can cause false dispatches. A false dispatch occurs when emergency response teams are unnecessarily dispatched to address the false alarm.

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What can I do to avoid false alarms?

As a security system owner, there are many ways you can help to prevent false alarms. The following tips are simple steps you can take that will greatly affect the number of false alarms you have during the lifespan of your security system.

Tips for reducing false alarms

1. Know your system

During installation, ask questions and ensure you understand how to operate the security system before the technician leaves. Insist that the keypad be easily accessible from the exit point and the arming delay is set for a reasonable period.

2. Maintain "call lists"

Keep your "call list" up to date with current phone numbers for you and your contacts. With the right contact information, monitoring stations can be proactive in determining if emergency response teams should be dispatched to your home.

3. Schedule annual inspections

Request annual maintenance inspections to ensure proper performance of the security system. Also, be sure to replace the battery every three to five years.

4. Properly train users

Ensure all family members and others who have a key to your residence are trained to properly use your security system and know the passcode and your monitoring station's phone number in case the alarm is accidentally set off. Never give a key to someone who is not familiar with the system.

5. Monitor changes in the home

After any changes in the household, contact your security provider to ensure they won't affect the security system. New pets that enter an armed room or plants or curtains placed too close to drafty areas can trigger a false alarm.

Ask your monitoring station about Enhanced Call Verification

Enhanced Call Verification (ECV) for security systems can help to reduce false dispatches. A monitoring station instructed to use ECV will try to get in touch with two or more contacts to confirm an alarm's validity before issuing a dispatch. According to the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA), communities that require ECV have seen emergency response to false alarms reduced by 30-50 per cent.

