



September 13, 2024

Greetings,

The Seattle Police Department (SPD) and the City of Seattle are committed to providing quality and timely service to its residents and businesses with the resources available. Our highest priority is responding to violent in-progress incidents that threaten the safety of our communities.

With those principles in mind, SPD has evaluated its response to a variety of different 911 calls for service to determine how we can most effectively ensure enough officers are available to respond to those violent incidents. The Seattle 911 Center receives approximately 13,000 residential and commercial burglary alarm calls from alarm monitoring companies per year. Unfortunately, most of these calls are the result of an unintended sensor trip by a homeowner or business employee. Many others are the result of old or failing equipment. Of the 13,000 alarm calls in 2023, less than 4% were confirmed to have a crime associated with them that resulted in an arrest or report being written.

Starting October 1, 2024, SPD will only dispatch officers to calls from alarm companies with supporting evidence, such as audio, video, panic alarms or eyewitness evidence that a person is illegally entering or attempting to enter a residence or commercial property. We will no longer respond to calls from alarm companies based only on sensor or motion activations. With depleted resources we cannot prioritize a patrol response when there is a very low probability that criminal activity is taking place. We know this will require that you notify customers of this change and that additional effort may be required to work with them on technology upgrades or alternative options. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

Please note that this change in SPD response does not change the licensing and reporting requirements for alarm system monitoring companies as defined in [Seattle Municipal Code \(SMC\) 6.10](#). Should you or your customers have any questions about when and how SPD responds to residential and commercial burglary alarms, please visit the City of Seattle website,

<https://www.seattle.gov/police/community-policing/community-programs/monitored-alarms>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'SR', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Sue Rahr  
Interim Chief of Police  
Seattle Police Department