



InfoLink

Information for Public Safety False Alarm Reduction Professionals

FARA InfoLink August 2017 Edition

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Help Those Impacted by Harvey

Here is information from the Texas State Government Site on how to help

- [Tips For Giving In Times Of Crisis](#)
- [American Red Cross](#)
- [The Salvation Army](#)
- [The United Way](#)
- [The Humane Society of the United States](#)
- [The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals](#)



Thanks to Institute Sponsors!

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FARA Training Symposium



Hotel and Dates are set

***DoubleTree Suites Seattle Airport
Southcenter
Seattle, WA***

May 1 to 3, 2018- FARA Symposium



[Download the Symposium Packet](#)

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Fire officials: 90 percent of dorm fires caused by cooking equipment

8.26.17 - www.wjlp.com - Albany, NY (NEWS10)

Many of you might remember the smell of burnt popcorn on your dorm room floor, hoping that it wouldn't set off the fire alarm. According to the fire department, cooking equipment is involved in nine out of 10 reported dorm fires. The severity of dorm room fires should not be underestimated.

During a demonstration by the fire department, in less than a minute, most of this room has already been consumed by a tremendous amount of fire.

"I didn't realize that a room could burn up that quickly from just a little candle and I was really surprised to see such a big fire from such a small start," Seojke Kim, a college student at Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Services, said.

"It was pretty crazy to watch that and it was kind of scary honestly," Josh Cote, college student at Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Services, said.

You could feel the intense heat during the demonstration. College students were able to see just how fast a dorm fire can spread onto the whole floor.

"You guys can feel that very easily and you guys were a good distance away in an open ventilated area," Jeremy Rue, NYS Fire Protection Specialist, said.

As you just saw this dorm room was completely engulfed in flames in just a couple minutes and the fire department explained that a fire can actually double in size in approximately 30 seconds.

"It makes you want to be more careful and yeah just be more careful and definitely not start a fire," Cote said.

Across the country, fire departments respond to an average of over 4,000 dorm room fires a year causing a yearly average of 35 injuries.

The fire simulation occurred today at the Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Services and was conducted by the Albany Fire Department. Around 100 students attended the demonstration.

[For More Info and to View a Video Demonstration](#)

Incoming TMA Prez Talks Central Station Challenges, New Initiatives

8.24.17 – SSI

Members of The Monitoring Association (TMA, formerly CSAA) recently elected industry veteran Ivan Spector to serve as president of the group. Spector is president of Montreal-based Sentinel Alarm Co., a full-service security and monitoring provider for more than four decades.



Among a wide breadth of industry participation and volunteer work in Canada and the United States, Spector has served on the board of directors for CANASA and was a founding member of the Security Industry Alarm Coalition (SIAC).

Spector will succeed Pam Petrow as TMA president at the conclusion of the association's annual meeting in Scottsdale, Ariz., in mid-October.

SSI spoke with him about his upcoming role and related industry topics.

What do you consider your immediate top objectives as president?

Our top objective is to drive membership consistent with our name change. So, besides pursuing those players in our industry there are other stakeholders which we feel should be engaged. It is up to us to drive value for them.

We will be releasing a refreshed version of our online education course, and continue to offer an over-the-top experience at our Annual Meeting in Scottsdale in October.

Our Five Diamond recognition is an industry benchmark, and our work and investment in ASAP [Automated Secure Alarm Protocol] demonstrates a deep commitment to our clients and partners in law enforcement.

Who are these other players and stakeholders?

When we review, for example, the top players in the industry - although TMA represents an extremely high percentage of monitored systems - there are still companies that are big players but not members.

That is the low-hanging fruit. Reflective of our name change is a desire to go out and get members in areas where perhaps we haven't really had a presence in the past.

It could be anywhere from pipeline monitoring to environmental monitoring to network monitoring to cyber-attack monitoring. The name change reflects a broader scope in terms of what we feel we can offer.

Take, for example, if you have OnStar in your vehicle. OnStar Corp. is doing monitoring. They run a monitoring center. We'd like them to obviously participate. We have a lot to offer them and they have a lot to offer us.

Any new member always brings something to the table and can contribute, perhaps if not in what they are doing then in the way they see things. Getting in new members and fresh blood and new volunteers and new participants is always healthy for any association.

What do you consider one of your biggest challenges as president?

When we look around we see the market is changing very rapidly. Technology is driving a lot of that change. There are many disruptors in our industry.

We've seen more change in the past five years than the previous 50. How we respond to some of those challenges is extremely important.

How are we going to make our traditional companies be able to compete, thrive and prosper during these changing times? As an association we have that responsibility to a good part of our membership.

So technology is a big driver. Third-party monitoring is changing dramatically. A lot of it based on the areas of expertise that are required to run and operate and offer services in a much more technical and IT- and IP-based environment.

Certainly, when people look back on our industry in 15 or 20 years and see there were hundreds, if not thousands, of companies doing duplication of efforts and services, we will shake our heads and say, "Look at the economies of scale that can be generated, the savings, and leveraging the expertise that will be available in order to do a much better, more cost-efficient and effective job."

Is capital expense a major challenge for TMA members to bring in new technologies to offer new types of monitoring services?

Absolutely. But don't forget, it's not only the capital expense. It is also the human capital that has to support those new services, the new customer experience.

Your customer service people need a whole different skillset that they didn't need 10 years ago. When you combine that with leveraging IT services, leveraging software as a service, interfacing with WiFi networks, helping and assisting clients with app-based services, it is a much wider world.

It requires varied skillsets, which we have to do a better job of being able to deliver to our members in order for them to have continued success. We have driven a lot of change at TMA during Pam Petrow's term as president.

We have to continue to be able to deliver relevant and potentially profitable education and training so that our members can continue to prosper in this rapidly-changing environment. If we don't, not only are we doing a disservice to our members but we are doing a disservice to the industry.

If you get a couple of steps behind, before you turn around you are out of the ballgame. You are just not in the game anymore; it's finished.

Unless companies keep up, keep relevant, stay focused and really participate in the association to get timely, relevant and important data, and do networking with their peers and with leaders in the industry, they shouldn't even be in business. And we are going to miss them.

[More Info](#)

Security Experts Reveal How They Fight False Alarms

8.10.17 - Security Sales & Integration

SSI Editor-in-Chief Scott Goldfine asked leading central stations COPS, Rapid Response, MONI and UCC what they are doing to reduce false alarms. You know how most great businesses, sports teams and other powerful organizations lose their mojo? They get a bit full of themselves, get too comfortable, arrogant or cocky, and complacency sets in.

They take their eye off the proverbial ball. I am sure some examples popped into your head - maybe even your own company.

There's a critical area I believe the majority of the security industry has eased off the gas pedal and finds itself in serious danger of falling asleep at the wheel: false alarm management and building responder relationships.

As a co-founder of the Police Dispatch Quality (PDQ) Award program with SIAC and FARA, it's an area I feel strongly about. I know the magnitude of damage losing sight of this cause can do to under-mine the credibility, effectiveness and profitability of the entire industry.

Those of us who attended the SIAC meeting at the recent ESX show commiserated about how - due to fewer recent jurisdictional flare-ups thanks to successful actions of the past - most are making the gross error of taking the calmer situation for granted.

Sure, false alarms are not as sexy and fun to deal with as some of the hot new automation technologies and services, but we must not lose sight that it all hinges on the platform of security.

It is our industry's differentiator in an ever-more crowded and competitive landscape, and so we must do all we can to protect and preserve that bedrock foundation.

This month being the Monitoring Issue, I thought it an opportune time to ask some of the leading wholesale central stations what they are doing to continue the false alarms fight ...

David Smith, COPS Monitoring: "We have a number of false alarm programs such as a learning period on new installs with no dispatch, ECV, electronic cancel, duplicate signal suppression, cross-zone/multiple zone verification, and a number of tools, reports, and flags designed to identify accounts with repeat alarms.

We also closely monitor our dealers' alarms per account and will assign experts to carefully analyze their entire account base and make recommendations to our dealer - before the accounts become a real problem."

Morgan Hertel, Rapid Response Monitoring: "ECV is our default action plan and we are consistently working on ways to provide customers with options to cancel a false alarm before a dispatch occurs.

We utilize technology any way possible. Implementing push notifications and bidirectional SMS messaging has been successful in reducing the overall number of false alarms.

We are active in PPVAR, IQ and FARA, and we have a team dedicated to reviewing signal activity and working with dealers to reduce high activity on accounts.

As we continue to see reductions in calls for service compared to the overall account growth, we still see a high percentage of false alarms for those that do get dispatched.

It's our belief that over the next five years technology will surface that will reverse the numbers. When that happens we will be in the front of the line to help our existing dealers get up to speed."

Grant Graham, MONI Smart Security: "Our alarm procedures follow ECV and we also accept electronic cancel signals as a form of verification, which reduces burglary alarms by approximately 30%.

When customers indicate that they are struggling with disarming the system due to key-pad issues, the customer is sent to customer tech support for assistance. In addition, we assist with police department permitting in certain jurisdictions.

In 2017, MONI introduced our proprietary ASAPer technology, which is built to allow customers the ability to cross-communicate on an alarm via web, SMS or email to verify false quickly with the center to abort a false dispatch.

We are also one of three charter members of the ASAP program, a computer-aided system that dramatically reduces alarm dispatch time."

Tracey Ritchie, UCC: "We deploy ECV, which significantly reduces dispatches caused by false alarms. Additionally, the dealers' alarm activity is monitored by the dealer support department who works closely with alarm dealers to identify and resolve potential issues.

Another UCC effort includes being a part of TMA's [The Monitoring Association] ASAP-to-PSAP electronic dispatch program. This program reduces the time it takes to dispatch authorities in an emergency and eliminates human error in data transmission of the address and other pertinent information.

UCC also works closely with FARA, sending at least one representative annually to their symposium to help promote a good relationship between responding authorities and the alarm industry."

Now mind your alarms and don't forget to support SIAC!

[More Info](#)

FARA's Believe it or Not

By: *Brad Shipp*

- **CT: Automatic fire alarm leads to shocking discovery**
7.27.17 - The Fairfield Citizen - An automatic fire alarm, triggered by a burning saucepan on the stove of a house Sunday morning, alerted local officials to a home filled with cats and a malnourished ... [More Info](#)
- **OH: Youths set off fire alarm with marijuana smoke: Mayfield Heights Police Blotter**
7.27.17 - The Cleveland Plain Dealer - Officers responded to the Drake apartments July 18 after some youths were suspected of setting off a fire alarm while smoking marijuana in a stairwell. A Nick Mayer Ford employee reported ... [More Info](#)
- **CA: Burglary Suspect Who Snacked on Jell-O Arrested by Laguna ...**
8.8.17 - NBC Southern California - ... continuing to scope out the business. The building was quickly surrounded by Laguna Beach police officers who were alerted by an alarm inside the business. [More Info](#)
- **Sex-starved spiders so big they can set off alarms are invading our ...**
8.25.17 - Metro - It's that time of year when spiders start preparing to head back indoors in search of a mate and looking for warmth. Dubbed 'spider season' you're likely to see an ... [More Info](#)
- **NM: Ghostly image on security video stuns family - WLOX.com - The ...**
8.24.17 - WLOX - Clovis, NM - Homeowner reacts with alarm as he spots an inexplicable figure darting across his driveway, caught on security camera. (Source: CNN). [More Info](#)

Do you have any stories you would like to share about strange, unusual, or funny reasons for false alarms? How about outlandish things that happen in the course of your usual work day? I know we all have them, so let's share and give everyone a chuckle! Please forward your stories to bradshipp@4yoursolution.com and we'll put them in the next InfoLink for all to share!

News on Door to Door Sales

Courtesy of NESA

- **Don't Fall for the Alarm Scam**
8.3.17 - WFMY News 2 - Sacramento, CA – It's not uncommon for alarm companies to go door-to-door trying to get new customers. However, the Better Business Bureau says some salesman are making fake claims and trick people into switching alarm companies. [More Info](#)
- **Alarm Scam Targeting Senior Citizens Has Residents Paying Two Separate Bills**
8.3.17 - CBS Miami - Veteran Bill McCullough says a salesman came to his front door saying they were taking over for his current alarm company and he'd get all new equipment. "He told me a lie," McCullough ... [More Info](#)
- **Consumer Alert: alarm contract scam**
8.16.17 - WPEC - He later learned he was tricked into signing a contract with a different alarm ... the salesman at her door promised to get her out of her current alarm contract, with ... [More Info](#)
- **FL: Pinellas: Take Caution With Home Solicitation Sales**
8.26.17 - Patch.com - The solicitors have offered everything from home repair services and alarm systems to the sale of meat. According to Florida Statutes in Chapter 501.021, people ... [More Info](#)
- **TN: Memphis man warns neighbors about door-to-door home security ...**
8.23.17 - FOX13 - Memphis, Tenn. - A Memphis man is warning neighbors about a security company that he says is more interested in taking money than keeping families safe. [More Info](#)
- **TN: Security company under investigation for taking advantage of the ...**
8.24.17 - FOX13 - Memphis, Tenn. - An alarm company at the center of a FOX13 Investigation is in trouble in with Utah's Consumer Protection Agency, and it was fined last year ... [More Info](#)
- **Security customer alarmed by company charges, little help**
8.23.17 - WBRZ - Baton Rouge - Six months of back and forth with an alarm company has pushed a woman over the edge. Joyce Reed says she's been paying Safe Home ... [More Info](#)

Public Safety Updates

Courtesy of NESA

- **AZ: Public Notice- Alarms Systems Ordinance**
8.13.17 - SanTanValley.com - WHEREAS, Pinal County Alarm Systems Ordinance No. 111302-PCAS was adopted to provide for the regulation of alarm systems pursuant to A.R.S. ... [More Info](#)
- **CA: Council approves proposed alarm fees**
8.3.17 - Lodi News-Sentinel - The Lodi City Council unanimously voted to approve the proposed fees for alarm permits, alarm installation and false alarms during its meeting Wednesday night in Carnegie Forum. [More Info](#)
- **CT: Police Reminder: Alarm Rules Require Annual Reregistration**
8.21.17 - The Newtown Bee - The police department's records unit has on file almost 4,000 locations where alarms - largely burglar alarms - are in place to warn property owners of illegal ... [More Info](#)
- **DC: Burglary Victim's Security Cameras Catch DC Officers Calling Him ...**
8.25.17 - NBC4 Washington - I was frantic because I was out of the country," Williams said of his reaction when his alarm company called him. It was the second time someone had robbed ... [More Info](#)
- **GA: Cities get thousands of false alarms each year**
8.4.17 - Reporter Newspapers Public safety officials in Sandy Springs, Brookhaven, Dunwoody and Atlanta have struggled with how to reduce the thousands of false alarms the cities receive. [More Info](#)
- **GA: New False Alarm Ordinance to Target Alarm Companies**
7.24.17 - Security Sales & Integration- Much to the displeasure of local alarm companies, the new ordinance will go into effect in September. [More Info](#)
- **LA: Sulphur Council hears of false alarms**
8.16.17 - American Press - Coats said false alarms put officers at risk when responding to those locations, because they may expect another false alarm, when instead, it's "something big. [More Info](#)
- **LA: West Monroe makes fire safety a priority in new ordinance**
8.9.17 - MyArkLaMiss - "Two years ago we had a fire in a house that did not have the proper smoke alarms in it and that family I believe several members perished," Alderman, Tom .. [More Info](#)
- **MA: Mass. Police Dump ShotSpotter in Favor of Video Surveillance**
7.28.17 - SSI - The Fall River Police Department has decided to shift its focus to video surveillance due to its high false alarm rate with ShotSpotter. [More Info](#)

- **MN: False alarms are about to get more expensive in St. Paul - Star Tribune**
8.3.17 - Minneapolis Star Tribune - The City Council opted for a smaller increase in the annual fee after public outcry. [More Info](#)
- **MN: False Alarms Lead St. Paul Police to Move Burglary Calls Down ...**
8.14.17 - KSTP.com - On top of that, higher costs for burglary alarm licenses in the city coupled with significantly higher fines for multiple false alarms have some St. Paul home and ... [More Info](#)
- **MO: \$50 fine, no police service: News 4 investigating SLMPD's false ...**
8.25.17 - KMOV.com - He and Alton believe a fine to recoup the cost of false alarm calls is one thing. But they say the police should never withhold service for money. "I consider that to ... [More Info](#)
- **MO: Columbia City Council Lifts Every Rock in Quest to Balance the ...**
8.24.17 - KBIA - Pension problems, false alarms and the "silver tsunami" are just a few of the issues plaguing the city of Columbia's 2018 budget. At Wednesday's City Council ... [More Info](#)
- **NC: Ask SAM: Do I need to register my alarm system with the police ...**
8.13.17 - Winston-Salem Journal - We have created a direct link to the information about the alarm ordinance and how to register at www.tinyurl.com/WSAlarmpermits. You can also call the Public ... [More Info](#)
- **NM: Armed and Dangerous – Can we stem the onslaught of armed ...**
8.20.17 - Albuquerque Journal - ... allows businesses to tie their security cameras into APD's center and allows APD to immediately view and monitor the cameras when an alarm is activated. [More Info](#)
- **PA: Springfield considers lock boxes for businesses**
8.26.17 - Allied News - The ordinance notes that these kinds of structures would be required to have the boxes: Commercial or industrial structures protected by an automatic alarm ... [More Info](#)
- **SC: Myrtle Beach firefighters have responded to almost 1000 false ...**
8.12.17 - WBTW - Myrtle Beach and Florence SC - Myrtle Beach Fire Rescue says it's responding to several false alarms each day, when firefighters could be responding to real ... [More Info](#)
- **VA: Newport News, VA Goes Live with Automated Secure Alarm Protocol (ASAP)**
8.4.17 - PR Newswire via Yahoo Finance - Alarm users in coastal Virginia city to benefit from faster, more accurate emergency response. Newport News, Virginia becomes the latest ...
- **WA: Vancouver may give ambulances key to gated communities**
8.18.17 - The Columbian - Vancouver Fire Chief Joe Molina said that the boxes outside of businesses are meant to allow firefighters access to a building where a fire alarm is sounding ... [More Info](#)

Industry News

Courtesy of NESAs

- **Monitoring Pros Analyze Latest Tech, DIY, RMR**
8.7.17 - Security Sales & Integration - Recurring revenue has long been the heartbeat of the alarm business. As alarms have broadened into security and more recently automation, management and ... [More Info](#)
- **ADT Agrees to Settle Deceptive Sales Lawsuits for \$5.5M**
7.28.17 - SSI - ADT reached agreements with three security companies after alleging its customers were being duped by misleading statements and sham sales practices. [More Info](#)
- **Apollo to Reportedly Take ADT Public for \$15B in 2018**
7.24.17 - SSI - The WSJ is reporting that ADT could register for the IPO in the fall and go public at the end of 2018. [More Info](#)
- **My Alarm Center announces sale to Oaktree**
7.21.17 – SIW - National home security and automation firm sold to investors. [More Info](#)
- **ADS Security Acquires ERMC Security Solutions**
8.4.17 – SDM - ADS Security, a regional electronic security and automation company headquartered in Nashville, Tenn., and ranked No. 20 on the SDM 100, ... [More Info](#)
- **Is Security Company Responsible for Loss of Property Value?**
8.1.17 – SDM - In a recent case before the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, an interesting question arose as to whether the defendant, the company providing security, could be responsible for a decrease in value of the property because of a loss that the plaintiff contended was the fault of the security company. [More Info](#)
- **When a security alarm isn't enough, some homeowners install pricey high-tech safe rooms**
8.5.17 - Los Angeles Times - Like James Bond, we'd all like to die another day — and intruder-proof safe rooms can help. [More Info](#)

- **ADT makes commercial purchase**
8.9.17 - SSN - Boca Raton, Fla. - ADT today announced it purchased substantially all the assets and business of Protec Inc., a commercial security system integrator based in the Pacific Northwest. [More Info](#)
- **ADS purchases ERM Security Solutions**
8.7.17 - SSN - Nashville, Tenn.- In a deal finalized on Aug. 3, ADS Security purchased ERM Security Solutions' account base, bringing more than 600 accounts under ADS' branch in Chattanooga, Tenn. [More Info](#)
- **Vector Security Expands Metro D.C. Clientele With Acquisition**
8.10.17 - SSI - The residential and commercial clients of the acquired company, Security Associates, will be serviced out of the Vector branch in Columbia, Md. [More Info](#)
- **Security Partners Enters Monitoring Collaboration With ADR Security**
8.14.17 - SSI - The new business venture will initially target jewelers in New York City, with plans to eventually expand the monitoring concept nationwide through a network of authorized dealers... [More Info](#)
- **Tech Electronics Acquires Professional Fire Alarm Systems**
8.18.17 - Security Sales & Integration - St Louis - Tech Electronics, based here, has acquired Professional Fire Alarm Systems (PFAS) of Topeka, Kan., a provider of commercial communications ... [More Info](#)
- **AT&T Exploring Sale of Digital Life Home Security Business, Report Says**
8.18.17 – SSI - AT&T is considering selling the security and home automation business unit to ease the debt load from a pending purchase of Time Warner, Reuters reports. [More Info](#)
- **Comcast establishes itself as a security industry mainstay**
8.18.17 - SIW - Cable giant has grown its home security business to over 1 million customers in just five years... [More Info](#)
- **SureView, Tyco Collaborate on Single Platform Video Verification**
8.22.17 - Security Sales & Integration - The SG-System 5 alarm receiver supports the visual verification features for DSC PowerSeries Neo, Tyco Security Products' wireless intrusion platform. [More Info](#)

FARA Mission Statement

It is the mission of the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA) to provide a forum for local government alarm ordinance professionals to exchange information on successful false alarm reduction programs, to serve as a clearinghouse for agencies seeking to reduce false alarms, and to foster an environment of cooperation among public safety, the alarm industry and the alarm users.

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Comments and suggestions regarding FARA's InfoLink are both encouraged and welcomed. If you would like to submit an article for publication, or if you have any questions or concerns about this newsletter, please contact us at 301-519-9237, or by e-mail at: info@faraonline.org

Please add FARA to your mailing list if you send out Newsletters or mailings with false alarm reduction information. Do you have a brochure that describes your ordinance or program? We would like to see it. Staff will review what we receive and share tips and information with your fellow members in later issues of this newsletter.

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