

Police Department False Alarm Fees Amended for 2016

As of January 1, 2016, the City of Mequon has implemented a new fee schedule which includes changes to the alarm fees the Police Department charges for false alarms. Previously, the Department allowed one false alarm per calendar year at no charge.

The new fee schedule is:

1st	\$100 (no more warnings)
2nd	\$150
3rd	\$250
4th and subsequent	\$350

Q. Why were the false alarm fees changed?

A: This amended fees were determined as part of the budget deliberations in preparing for 2016. The City determined that the Police Department responds to hundreds of false alarms per year, and it is resource intensive. The City is also seeking to standardize the public safety response fees and align the police fees to match the fire fees. The amended false alarm fees are identical to those of the Mequon Fire Department.

Q. Why do police respond, even after I tried to cancel them?

A. There are many ways to accidentally set off an alarm (forgot it was activated and opened door, a pet, a balloon, a serviceman, etc.) but nonetheless, the police department has to treat each one as real until we know otherwise. The vast majority are false, but we can't ASSUME that and be caught off guard or unprepared if it is fact a burglary or other crime in progress.

Some people have called and tried to cancel the police response after their alarm company has contacted the police department. By then it is too late; the officers are on the way and must determine the validity of the call themselves. It is similar to a 911 hang-up call. The dispatcher calls the number back and speaks with the caller who hung up. They might tell us that everything is okay, but we respond to make sure that no one is forcing them to say that. It is unlikely, but not impossible, that someone who just broke into their house is pointing a weapon at them and forcing them to say everything is fine, when it isn't. That is the reality of today's world and the service level that we provide to our citizens, for the safety of everyone.

Q. Can I still get a warning and have the fee waived?

A. Unless responding officers find evidence of a crime, an emergency, or a fire, the alarm is considered false and is subject to the existing fee schedule.

Q. What about alarms caused by the weather?

A. Alarms caused by tornadoes, severe weather, or other acts of nature are not considered a false alarm and are not subject to the aforementioned fee schedule.