

	Terryville Fire Department Best Practices	
	<u>Subject</u> Automatic Fire Alarms	BP# 3-13
	<u>Authority</u> Chief of Department	Initiated 8/1/2017 Revised

A. PURPOSE

1. These best practices have been established to ensure the proper response and safety of our members when dispatched to both residential and commercial automatic fire alarms.

B. GENERAL GUIDELINES / CONSIDERATIONS

1. All members shall comply with all safety related best practices.
2. The first arriving chief or officer must provide for safe apparatus positioning for responding fire and EMS crews if the alarm is upgraded.
3. Incidents involving heavy rescue, hazardous materials, fuel leaks or an electrical emergency (wires down) should have all traffic stopped or diverted until the hazard has been mitigated.

B. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

1. Residential – For the purpose of these best practices, 1 or 2 family dwellings will be considered residential structures.
 - a. First arriving chief or officer shall perform an initial scene size-up to determine if an upgrade of the alarm is necessary. Any indication of smoke or fire will be reported to the dispatcher and a Signal 3 will be requested if necessary. If a fire is confirmed, refer to BP# 3-03, Private Dwelling Fires.
 - b. Attempt to make contact with resident and determine cause of alarm.
 - i. If resident contact is made and they advise of a false alarm, the Officer in Charge (OIC) will confirm the false activation and offer assistance if necessary.
 - ii. If resident contact is made and they do not know why the alarm activated, an investigation shall be initiated to determine the cause of the alarm.
 - c. If there is no answer at the door, a thorough check of the residence shall commence. The preplan information shall be checked for emergency contact or key holder information.

- i. The OIC will use his/her discretion when determining if forcible entry is needed.
 1. This decision may be based on the ability or inability to see inside the residence or other determining factors.
 2. In all cases where forcible entry is necessary, the Suffolk County Police Department shall be notified and requested to respond.
2. Commercial – To include multiple family apartment/condo complexes.
 - a. First arriving chief or officer shall perform an initial scene size-up to determine if an upgrade of the alarm is necessary. Any indication of smoke or fire will be reported to the dispatcher and a Signal 3 will be requested if necessary. If a fire is confirmed, refer to BP# 3-04, Commercial Structure Fires.
 - b. Attempt to make contact with building representative and determine cause of alarm.
 - i. If contact is made and they advise of a false alarm, the Officer in Charge (OIC) will confirm the false activation and offer assistance if necessary.
 - ii. If contact is made and they do not know why the alarm activated, an investigation shall be initiated to determine the cause of the alarm.
 - c. If there is no answer or if the business is closed, a check of the structure shall commence. The preplan information shall be checked for emergency contact, key holder or knock box information.
 - i. The OIC will use his/her discretion when determining if forcible entry is needed.
 1. This decision may be based on the ability or inability to see inside the structure or other determining factors.
 2. Prior to forcing entry into a commercial structure, ensure that there is no knock box at the location.
 3. In all cases where forcible entry is necessary, the Suffolk County Police Department shall be notified and requested to respond.
 - d. If a commercial alarm is deemed to have activated for an unknown reason, avoid resetting the alarm if possible. Request the building representative contact their alarm company to respond for service. Advise the dispatcher of the activated zone and request the fire marshal follow up during normal business hours. Based on the time of day or other factors, the alarm may be reset but the fire marshal should still be notified for routine follow up.

- e. If a commercial alarm was activated accidentally and the cause is determined, a reset of the alarm system may be accomplished. If the system resets but continues to display a trouble alarm, advise the building representative to contact their alarm company for service.
- f. If a commercial alarm was activated accidentally via pull station, reset the pull station and attempt a reset of the system.
- g. If a commercial alarm was activated accidentally due to active water flow, broken pipe, active sprinkler, etc., secure the water before attempting to silence the alarm system. All confirmed water flow alarms will require a fire marshal response to ensure the system is properly restored.