



The ALARMGRAM is a publication of Lexington Alarm Systems, Inc. Published quarterly to maintain an awareness of important safety and security issues that affect our customers, associates and friends.

THE ALARMGRAM

**Sales and Customer Service 781-275-4200
Toll Free 800-870-4204**

**24 Hour Central Station 781-275-4300
Fax 781-275-3141**

On Call...

The Spring of last year was the first time we let everyone know of our efforts to embrace the building of an orphanage in a small village in Tanzania. The support, encouragement and resources that were generated is truly incredible. Since then, a school house has been opened, a dormitory has been built and soon a kitchen/dining hall will be completed. The project is significantly self-sustaining with water collection, vegetable gardens and the ability to make methane gas for cooking from cow manure. It's an amazing project and the children it serves play an integral part in its daily success. Please visit the web site if you are interested in learning more. Many, many thanks to all of you who helped and continue to help make the hopeless lives of unfortunate children blossom into prosperity full of promise.



Speaking of building, don't miss the back page article in this issue of the AlarmGram that gives you some ideas to consider when assessing and building your security. Also, as always we welcome the opportunity to assist you with any security or safety need. Whether it's a how to change your code question to scheduling your annual inspection, we are here to help.

Yours for a safe and secure spring,

Donald W. Martini President

We're Glad You Asked

Q. Do the batteries in my smoke detectors need to be changed?

A. Wired smoke detectors that are part of your alarm system are powered by the central power supply that supports the entire alarm system. The power supply battery needs to be changed every 4-5 years and is typically done as part of an annual maintenance inspection. Wireless smoke detectors do have batteries. These are also tested and changed if necessary during your annual inspection.

The Real World

For many years one of the biggest challenges faced by emergency responders has been actually locating the building or residence where an emergency has been reported. We have a tendency to forget the need to distinctly mark our homes and businesses because we are so familiar with them. But if you put yourself in the place of a police officer or firefighter/paramedic trying to find you for the first time, knowing you are in need of immediate help, you will realize the anxiety and frustration unmarked structures can create for them.

With the advent of GPS systems that help with routing and locating an address, there is a misconception that a home or business will be easy for first responders to find. The Real World is; it's not easy. Street numbers more often than not, jump in random increments. Often numbers on one side of a street do not correspond with the numbers on the other side. Numbers posted on a home or business that are small or don't contrast with the color also make it very difficult to identify the location. These challenges are multiplied at night or in rain or snow.

The Real World is: Property Identification Signs are of tremendous assistance to first responders. Using black numbers on a 9"x15" white placard identifying the property as protected by a Lexington AlarmSystem, is one of the most helpful ways to get emergency services to you quickly. Having been dispatched by Lexington Alarm, first responders are already looking for the trademark sign with your street number, to quickly confirm they are at the correct location.

If you do not have a Property Identification Sign or yours was damaged over the winter, please let us know and we will install a new one at no charge, the next time we are in your area. It's the best way to help those who are coming to help you.

The LexingtonAlarm Mission

To provide peace of mind to our residential and commercial customers by designing custom security, safety and environmental systems that are installed, monitored and serviced to the highest professional standards.

Strength in Layers

As residential security concerns shift from predominantly empty home coverage to a more personal safety emphasis, the design of a security alarm system needs to be assessed from a different stand point. A security alarm is best described as an intrusion detection system. The concept is to detect and deter a potential intruder. Electronic detection alone however does not provide the most complete deterrence possible.

When assessing personal safety needs, whether at work or at home, it should be done in a layered approach. The outermost layer would be lighting, visibility, fencing and vegetation. The next layer would be the physical security of the structure. This includes door hardware, deadbolts, security pins and limit locks. The electronic layer is next and for personal safety should include devices applied directly to doors and windows. This is the earliest and best alarm coverage for personal safety because it detects and announces an intrusion attempt while the person is still outside the home.

It should be noted that motion detectors are not considered personal safety devices. A motion detector requires a person be inside before it triggers. Safer coverage is to alarm the perimeter and announce to someone that they have been discovered before they get in. Motion detector based systems work very well for empty homes or businesses or to supplement a perimeter system when the structure is empty.

The last layer that can be employed is a safe room or secure space. This could be as simple as an existing walk-in closet fitted with a secure door and deadbolt locks. A battery powered light and cell phone would be useful to have immediately at hand in a safe room. If there is an opportunity to actually design a safe room into a home or business additional safety enhancements might include a camera monitor with cameras viewing key areas. The walls of a newly constructed safe room are typically reinforced with a layer of masonry material, steel fencing in the wall or double sided concrete board.

A quick security assessment of your property should include:

- How visible is my property overall? Does fencing or vegetation provide places for an intruder to hide?
- Does my lighting work? Does it provide bright wide area coverage of walk ways, the garage and entry?
- Are my doors and windows secure? Find the weakest ones and consider making them more secure.
- Does my alarm system cover all easily accessed doors and windows including, balconies, decks, fire escape and roof access windows?
- If I have sliding glass doors or large glass panels does my system include Acoustic Glass Break sensors?

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