



DuPont Police Department Alarm Permit Questions and Answers

The DuPont City Council passed ordinance 02-725 requiring owners of alarm systems to obtain a permit through the City of DuPont. This ordinance became effective July 30, 2002 and alarm owners were allowed until December 31, 2002, to apply. Here are the most asked questions regarding the alarm permit.

Who needs to apply? – Anyone owning an alarm system (monitored or not monitored) located in DuPont needs to apply. Owners of alarm systems located within the city limits do not apply for a permit with the Sheriff's Department because response to their alarms would be from their own local law enforcement officers. If unsure whether an alarm street address is county, city town or unincorporated Pierce County call (253) 798-4248 to have the address checked.

I have a burglary system located in DuPont, How do I get the alarm permit I need? – Alarm owners need to obtain and complete an application form provided by the City of DuPont. Forms are available at DuPont City Hall, 1700 Civic Drive, DuPont, WA 98327. A \$50.00 fee (make check payable to the City of DuPont) is required. This is a one-time fee. A yellow sticker will be issued to the alarm owner. The stickers need to be displayed on or near the main entrance to the premise where it is clearly visible to responding police. It must be displayed at the address listed on the application or it is not valid.

What if I move? – The permit is not transferable. If the home or business is sold, the permit holder needs to come to the DuPont City Hall and cancel their permits so they are not held responsible for others using the alarm. The new owner needs to apply for his or her own permit at City Hall.

What if I do not obtain an alarm permit? - Operating an alarm without a valid permit after January 1, 2003 will be in violation of the **DuPont Municipal Code 9.15**. Alarm owners without permits will be issued a civil infraction in accordance with **RCW 7.80.120**.

How are monies being spent? - Monies collected for permit fees and charges for false alarms will go into a general fund from which Law Enforcement draws support.

What is a "False Alarm"? - A false alarm is any alarm activation when no unlawful act, attempted crime, or police, fire or medical emergency had occurred on the premises. An alarm is presumed to be false if the officers cannot find any evidence of intrusion or other unlawful act, which might have caused the alarm to sound.

What causes false alarms? – The largest single cause for false alarms is human error. Ensure that everyone who uses the alarm system knows how it works; how to turn it off and on, and what to do should anyone accidentally set it off. Everyone should practice using the alarm system until they feel confident about its operation. Test your alarm system at least once a month to confirm that it is in correct working order. Most alarm systems have a battery backup feature. Make sure the batteries are fully charged or replaced on a regular basis. When testing your alarm system, notify your monitoring company prior to beginning the test. If you have any doubts about your alarm system, call your alarm company or immediate service. Check sensors, make sure doors fit well in casings, have animals contained so they do not set off the alarm, and don't leave mylar balloons floating in the house.

What if I accidentally set off my alarm? - First, turn off (disarm) your alarm. If your alarm is monitored, immediately telephone the monitoring company's central station and cancel the police response. If your alarm system is not monitored and only rings locally, turn off the alarm and call 911 immediately to report your false alarm. Do not assume the police were not notified if your alarm went off for only a few seconds.

What happens if a Police Officer responds to a false alarm? - Alarm owners are given or mailed copies of a False Alarm Compliance Report written by the Police Officer when responding to the residence. The lower portion of the form needs to be filled out by the alarm owner and the yellow copy returned to DuPont City Hall (Attn: Alarm Coordinator). The pink copy is for the alarm owner's records. If alarm owner find evidence of attempted break in, forced entry or other evidence of burglary, call 911 immediately to correct the false alarm report.

What are the false alarm fees? - The purpose of the alarm law is to require immediate response by law enforcement to an alarm. When the response turns out to be false, for whatever reason, the resources of law enforcement have been wasted. For the reason, city code requires penalties. To minimize the number of false alarms, most cities have ordinance, which control the frequency of police responses to reported false alarms. This control is accomplished through the assessment of a fine if too many false alarms occur within a set period. In the City of DuPont, an invoice will be issued for the second false alarm in a six month period. The fine for the second false alarm is \$50.00. The fine goes up \$50.00 for each additional false alarm in a six month period.

- The subscriber will be billed by the City for each false alarm in excess of one (1) response during a rolling six month window. The charge will increase in increments of \$50.00 as follows:
 1. False Alarm – None
 2. False Alarms - \$50.00
 3. False Alarms - \$100.00
 4. False Alarms - \$150.00
 5. False Alarms - \$200.00
- No fee shall be charged to a person whose alarm fees exceed one (1) in a six-month period, if a person can show a receipt for repair services rendered on said alarm system prior to the most recent report of false alarm.

What can I do to assist the DuPont Police Department? - Cancel police response immediately when false alarms occur. Make sure address numbers are easily visible from street day and night. If you have an address that is difficult to find, be sure to give specific driving instructions to your alarm company to be passed along to the police at the time of alarm's activation. Make sure your alarm company decal and your alarm system permit are easy to locate. Supply emergency contact names and telephone numbers to your Alarm Company and the DuPont Police Department in case you cannot be located at the time your alarm system is activated. Update this information as often as needed with both your monitoring company and the alarm coordinator at DuPont City Hall.

Why an Alarm Permit Program? - 98% of all alarm signals are false alarms. False alarms cost you money. The cost in service fees or fines, tax dollars and inconvenience are in addition to the potential danger to citizens and police officers. Help reduce the number of false alarms reported to police by staying alert to potential problems with your alarm systems and using your alarm in a responsible manner. The DuPont Police Department wants you to feel safe and secure with your alarm system, without concern and expense of false alarms. The goal is to reduce the number of false alarms police officers respond to so that there can be more effectively utilizes responding to criminal matters and community issues facing us all.

For questions or additional information, call (253) 912-5381 between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm.