



AVOIDING FALSE ALARMS

A Building Occupiers Guide

The Fire Service do not charge to attend buildings where there is a fire, or a potential for a fire to break out. They do, however, have the ability to recover costs for attending a false alarm in a building, and at present charge \$1000.00 +GST to attend calls to buildings which have had multiple false alarms over a 12 month period.

False Alarms are a nuisance to the Fire Service, depleting their resources in the event of a real fire, and breeding complacency from occupants of buildings. The productivity downtime from having the staff from an entire building out of commission for 15-30 minutes while evacuating under a false alarm can easily run into thousands of dollars.

In order to assist you to prevent False Alarms in your building, we have produced a guide to assist you with understanding what causes alarms and how to avoid.

◆ **Inform Guests about your Alarm system**

Visitors are often the cause of False Alarms because they are not aware of the impact of the actions they are taking in the building. Make sure visitors are aware of your Fire Alarm.

◆ **Advise all contractors to be aware of the Fire System**

Tradespeople are the number 1 cause of false alarms. Download a Contractor Advice Form suitable for your building from www.ffp.co.nz and ensure all contractors signing in are aware of the fire detection and how to avoid it. Isolate areas where trades staff are working, by contacting your Fire Protection company.

◆ **Arrange more regular cleaning of detectors**

Smoke detectors are cleaned 5-yearly as part of routine testing, but this can often not be enough to prevent false alarms. Arrange with your Fire Alarm Contractor to clean detectors more often in high traffic areas, and areas with high dust potential. Residential areas are especially dusty.

◆ **Don't touch the detectors or cables**

Tempting as it may be, this can cause the alarms to activate. Leave this to the professionals.

◆ **Do not run equipment in your building which emits fumes or dust or smoke detectors**

Fumes and dust in the air look just like smoke to a detector. Please make sure that you do not operate machinery, or fumigation without first arranging the detectors to be temporarily disabled in the area first.

◆ **Think about the location of smoke detectors where you may be adding new equipment detectors**

New equipment can often create a new environment which may need the fire detection adjusted. Contact your Fire Contractor to discuss any new equipment which could affect your Alarm.

◆ **Repair leaks in your roof**

Water and electronic detectors don't mix well. Make sure you repair leaky roof coverings quickly.

◆ **Make sure Manual Call Points have intact covers**

Replace broken glass or Snapglaze covers as these are a cause of false alarms.

◆ **If in doubt, ask first**

Ring us first, and ask if you think there could be an issue.