

LEGAL CORNER



The New City of L.A. Ordinance is Here Notify Your Customers - Call Your Lawyer!

After much controversy and drama, the L.A. City Council finally adopted a new “false alarm” ordinance, which went into effect November 8, 2004.

If you haven’t notified your customers already, it would be a good idea to get something out to them *immediately!* As of the effective date of the ordinance, **there are now NO free false alarms.** If you don’t warn them in advance, your customers will almost certainly come screaming to you when they get their first \$115 fine for a false alarm, regardless of whether you are “responsible.” And not only do fines for subsequent false alarms add up fast, but the police will essentially stop responding after the second false alarm, except for holdup alarms.

Your Association has materials prepared (for members only) that you can use to inform yourself about the ordinance and mail to your customers to notify them. These have been reviewed and approved by the Association’s lawyers. **This is one of the benefits of being a member of the SCSA and makes it well worth the \$300 annual fee.**

Just as important: You need to check with your lawyer and **revise your contracts**, to make sure the service you can provide is what is agreed to with your customers. Many customers will now want response by a private guard service, rather than relying on police response, for which they will get little comfort (delayed response, at best, to other than a holdup alarm) and may have to pay high fines. It would be wise to have a guard response provision either written in to your agreements or available on a separate “rider.” Give me a call for a **no-charge** consultation.

Mr. Gottlieb is a legal specialist in the security and fire protection industry. He provides contracts and other legal forms, and advises on legal compliance matters.

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