

CHARGES

Fire services throughout Australia charge for attending unwanted alarms to encourage building owners and managers to proactively manage their fire alarm systems.

Automatic fire alarm charges are the responsibility of the person/s who have entered into a contractual agreement with the Automatic Fire Alarm Service Provider. Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW) does not support charges being passed on to individual occupants, although exceptions may apply.

FRNSW allows for one unwanted alarm activation within a 60 day period, while second and subsequent unwanted alarm activations may be chargeable. Charges will only be applied once for unwanted alarm activations within a 24 hour period. Only one of the above leniencies will apply in any 24 hour period.

FRNSW can, in certain circumstances, waive all or part of an alarm charge. Your Automatic Fire Alarm Service Provider can provide advice on the FRNSW waiver process.

HELP

Fire and Rescue NSW has a dedicated Alarms Assessment team who can give advice on strategies to minimise unwanted alarms.

For further information visit fire.nsw.gov.au or contact us at:

Fire and Rescue NSW
Field Operations Business Services
Phone (02) 9742 7550
Email alarms@fire.nsw.gov.au



Australia and New Zealand working together to reduce unwanted alarms



THE COST OF UNWANTED ALARMS

- Lives at risk due to a 'culture of complacency' created by unwanted alarms
- Business downtime due to evacuations
- Firefighting resources are unavailable for genuine emergencies
- Increased risk of accident and injury to firefighters and the public when responding to unwanted alarms under lights and siren
- Inefficient alarm systems can result in additional maintenance costs



UNWANTED ALARMS

A GUIDE FOR BUILDING OWNERS, MANAGERS AND OCCUPANTS



MAIN CAUSES FOR UNWANTED ALARMS

- + Poor ventilation
- + Cooking fumes and burnt toast
- + Steam
- + Aerosol sprays
- + Candles and incense
- + Cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, hookahs and shishas
- + Tradespeople and cleaners
- + Dust
- + Dirty smoke detectors
- + Damage to 'break glass alarms' or 'manual call points'
- + System malfunctions
- + Poorly maintained systems
- + Insufficient maintenance frequency in harsh environments
- + Insect infestation

INFORMATION FOR OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS

- + DO NOT leave cooking unattended
- + DO NOT walk away from a toaster that is in use
- + DO NOT smoke near smoke detectors
- + DO NOT use aerosol sprays near smoke detectors
- + Educate your staff and visitors to understand your building is protected by an automatic fire alarm system
- + Manage work activities that produce dust, heat, smoke, steam etc. to ensure a detector is not activated
- + Ventilate steam and fumes away from smoke detectors, particularly from bathrooms and kitchens
- + In the case of an emergency, call Triple Zero (000)

MANAGE YOUR SITE

Ensure your fire alarm system is tested and maintained to the relevant Australian Standards by a professional fire alarm technician.

Maintain a detailed log of all unwanted alarms. This can expose causal factors, such as occupant or system behavioural patterns and faulty components.

Implement and enforce an on-site works management plan that will prevent activations by tradespeople using welders, blowers and other equipment.

If you are experiencing excessive unwanted alarms, consider calling Fire and Rescue NSW Alarms Assessment team on (02) 9742 7550 for advice on how to reduce unwanted alarm activations.

FACT

Fire and Rescue NSW responds to over 47,000 automatic fire alarms annually, with 97% of those relating to unwanted alarms. Not all unwanted alarms are chargeable.

