



FALSE ALARM REDUCTION PROGRAM

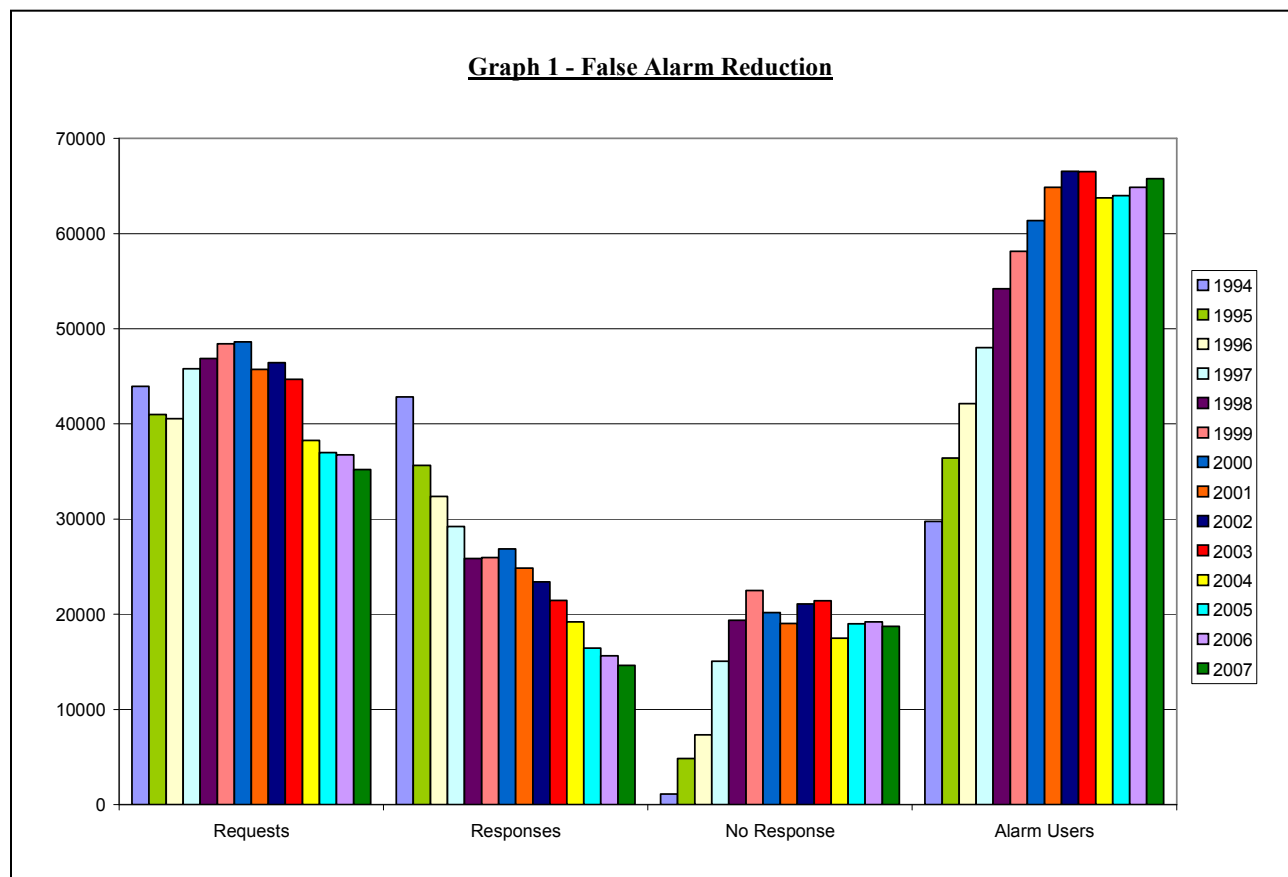


***ANNUAL REPORT
FOR YEAR ENDING 2007***

False Alarm Reduction

The False Alarm Reduction Section (FARS) of the Montgomery County Department of Police completed its twelfth year of enforcement under the amended Chapter 3A, Alarms, of the Montgomery County Code. The FARS reports that there was an additional, substantial decrease in the incidence of false alarms between 2006 and 2007, despite an increase of 5962 new alarm users. The FARS also worked diligently to bring the City of Takoma Park alarm users on board, successfully moved its office from Rockville to Gaithersburg, assisted numerous public safety agencies throughout North America with development and implementation of their own alarm management programs, participated in regional public safety alarm management meetings and revamped the FARS alarm law and false alarm prevention brochures.

In calendar year 2007, false alarms to which police officers were required to respond were reduced by an additional 6.4%, which brings the total to a full 66.6% reduction in false alarms since enforcement of the False Alarm Reduction Program began in earnest in March 1995. Additionally, police officers responded to 28,166 *less* alarm calls in 2007 over 1994. These statistics, coupled with a 121% increase in the number of registered alarm users over the same time period, clearly shows that substantial and *sustained* false alarm reduction is still being achieved even after 12 years and that the alarm law is an excellent tool in reducing false alarms and positively changing alarm user and alarm business behavior. It is also a testament to a well-written, enforceable law and a highly dedicated and talented FARS staff.



Graph 1 – False Alarm Reduction, provides information on the number of *requests* for dispatch vs. *actual responses* (dispatched). If the false alarm reduction program is successful, the responses should continue to decrease relative to the number of total alarm users, and this fact is evident in the graph. The graph also provides information on calls where no response was made, as well as the total number of alarm users. The number of actual alarm calls to which police officers respond has continued to decrease. Police responded to only 14,655 of the total 35,221 requests made, or 41.6%. There were a total of 18,751 alarm activations to which the police were not required to respond in 2007.

Additionally, the number of *requests for dispatch* is at a new all-time low. In 2007, there were a total of 35,221 requests for dispatch to alarm activations. Requests for dispatch remained fairly static between 1994 and 2003 and results were measured in how many *less* responses police officers were required to make. While this is still the most important measure of the success of the program, 2007 marked the fifth year running where a decrease in the number of requests for dispatch was achieved, which continues to have far-reaching benefits for the Police Department beyond savings measured in police officer time. Less actual alarm calls into our Emergency Communications Center means time recovered for Police Telecommunicators to handle other requests for service from Montgomery County citizens. This is an extremely positive measure, which is directly attributable to the alarm industry's continued Enhanced Call Verification (ECV) initiative.

Chapter 3A, Alarms, of the Montgomery County Code requires alarm companies to attempt to verify the validity of an alarm signal *prior* to requesting police dispatch. This attempted verification generally requires one telephone call be made to the site to determine the cause of the alarm signal. In 2004, some alarm companies in Montgomery County voluntarily instituted Enhanced Call Verification in which they make the initial call to the site, and if unable to reach a responsible party, make at least one additional telephone call to another phone number, usually the customer's cell phone. This voluntary initiative continued to show positive effects in 2007 further reducing the number of actual calls for service for alarm activations into our 9-1-1 center.

Absent enforcement of the alarm statute, coupled with an overall increase in alarm users, one would expect that the actual dispatches to alarm activations would increase substantially, or at least at the same rate of growth. **However, actual responses to alarm activations were reduced by an additional 6.4% between 2006 and 2007.**

In 1994, Montgomery County police officers responded on 97.5% of all requests for dispatch (43,936 requests for dispatch with 42,821 actual responses). However, in 2007, police officers responded to only 41.6% of all requests for dispatch (35,221 requests for dispatch with only 14,655 actual responses). Part of the reason for this discrepancy in requests for dispatch vs. actual response is due to the requirement that an alarm company cancel a police response when it is determined that an alarm activation is false. This is achieved through telephone or other electronic verification with the alarm user at the time of alarm system activation. The high number of non-responses (18,751) was due, in part, to that required cancellation by alarm companies. The higher the number of cancellations, the better the job the alarm companies are doing of reducing the number of false alarms to which police officers respond. In 2007, alarm companies cancelled 8,778 requests for dispatch, which represents 25.0% of the total requests for dispatch. These cancellations

provide officers with more time to engage in other more critical law enforcement related activities and community policing initiatives.

The FARS also continued its strict enforcement of all requirements for requesting dispatch, including providing the correct alarm user registration and alarm business license numbers. Police officers were not dispatched when an alarm business failed to provide all of the required information to Emergency Communications Center call-takers. Nor were police dispatched if an alarm user was in a violation status for failure to register, failure to pay a false alarm response fee or failure to upgrade the alarm system when required to do so. The legally mandated non-response provisions of the alarm law resulted in only 1,992 requests for dispatch that were denied as a result of the violation status of the alarm user or alarm business. This represents only 5.7% of the total requests for alarm dispatch. The FARS will continue to work to reduce this percentage to even more negligible numbers.

Graph 2 and Chart 1 – Requests for Dispatch vs. Actual Responses depict the difference between the requests for dispatch and the actual responses since 1994. As stated previously, requests for dispatch in 2007 continued to decline. The actual responses (14,655) to requests also continued its downward trend. This, coupled with 5,962 new alarm users, is incredibly positive and demonstrates the effectiveness of Montgomery County’s alarm law.

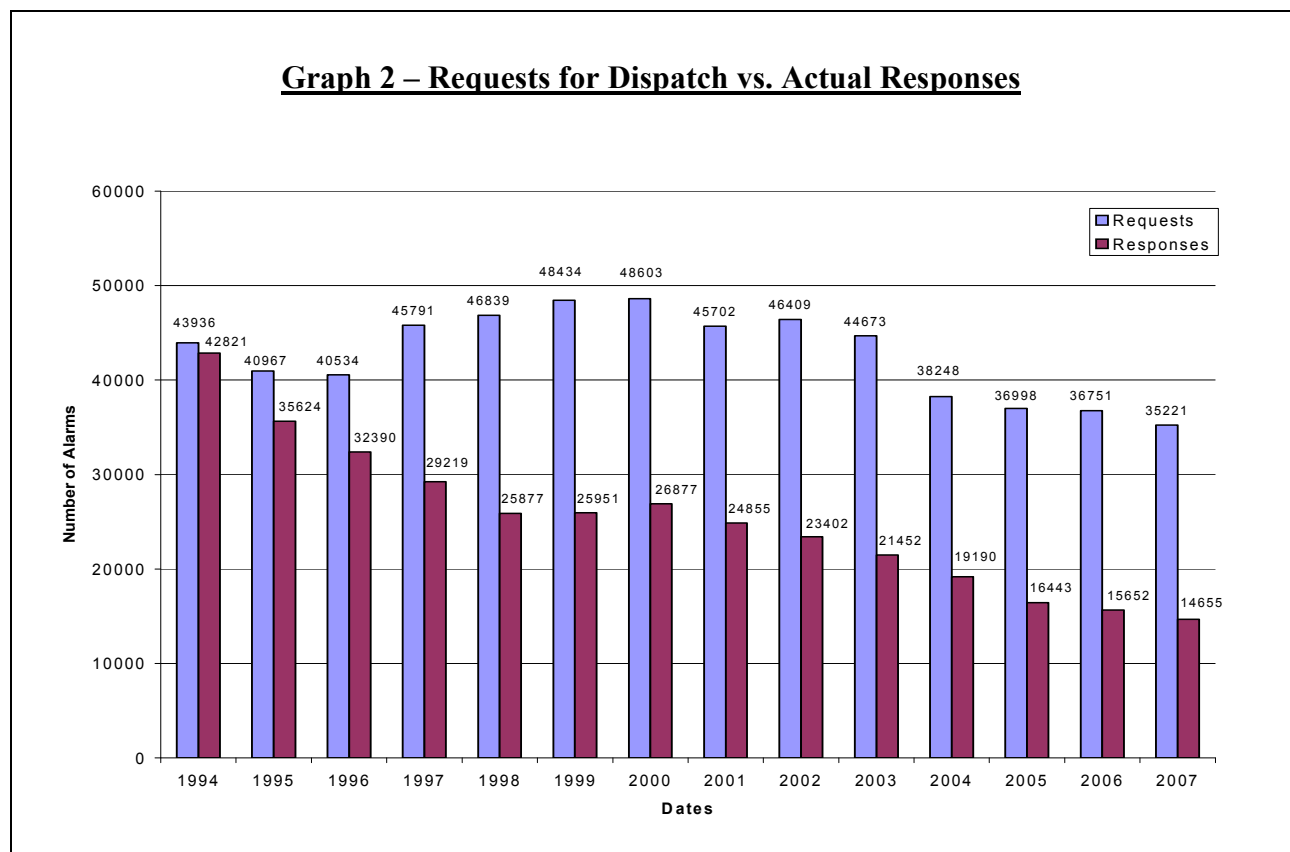


Chart 1 – Requests for Dispatch vs. Actual Responses

<u>Year</u>	<u>Requests for Dispatch</u>	<u>Actual Responses</u>	<u>Percentage of Total Calls Responded To</u>
1994	43,936	42,821	97.5%
1995	40,967	35,624	87.0%
1996	40,534	32,390	79.9%
1997	45,791	29,219	63.8%
1998	46,839	25,877	55.3%
1999	48,434	25,951	53.9%
2000	48,603	26,877	55.3%
2001	45,702	24,855	54.4%
2002	46,409	23,402	50.5%
2003	44,673	21,452	52.0%
2004	38,248	19,190	49.8%
2005	36,998	16,443	44.4%
2006	36,751	15,652	42.6%
2007	35,221	14,655	41.6%

The false alarm dispatch rate is the truest measure of false alarm reduction, as it calculates the number of false alarm dispatches relative to the total number of alarm users. The false alarm dispatch rate is the only rate, which takes into account the growth of the alarm user base. The Montgomery County False Alarm Reduction Section reports it has the lowest false alarm dispatch rates of any jurisdiction in the entire country. The residential false alarm dispatch rate decreased once again in 2007 to .14. Overall, residential alarm users experience less than one false alarm every five years, which is a truly remarkable statistic. The commercial false alarm dispatch rate for 2007 dropped to an incredible low of .70. Combined residential and commercial false alarm dispatch rates fell to an all-time low of .22.

When the dispatch rates are as low as they are in Montgomery County, even a .01% decline reflects a significant reduction. Commercial dispatch rates dropped a whopping .06%, while residential rates dropped a further .02%. The combined dispatch rate has been reduced 121% since 1994.

Chart 2 – False Alarm Dispatch Rates

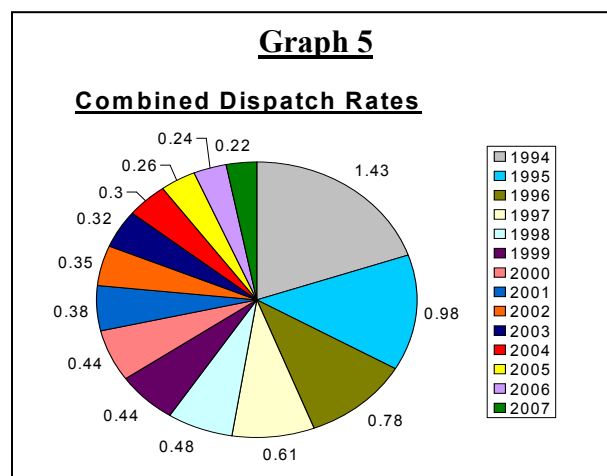
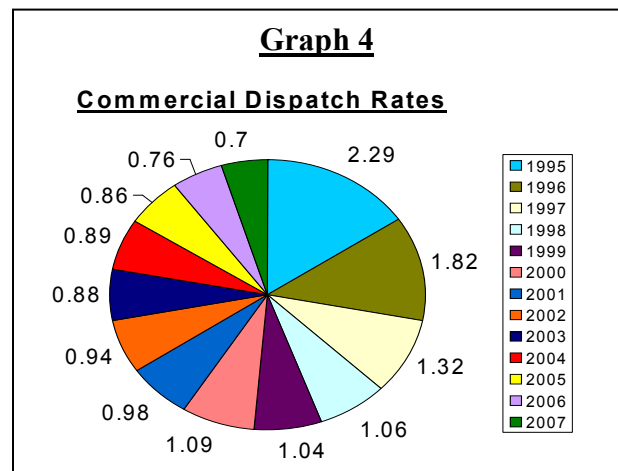
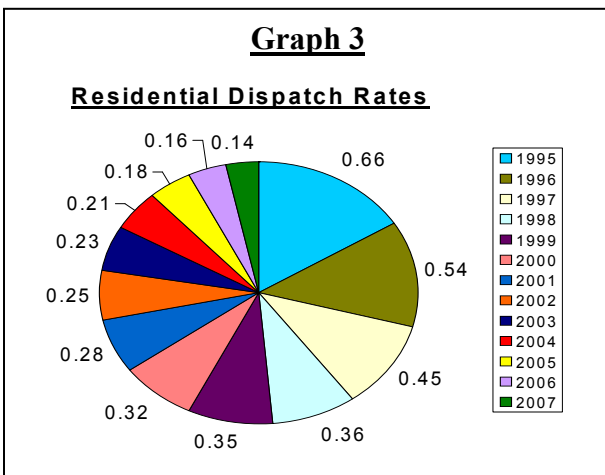
<u>Year</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Combined</u>
1994	N/A	N/A	1.43
1995	.66	2.29	.98
1996	.54	1.82	.78
1997	.45	1.32	.61
1998	.36	1.06	.48
1999	.35	1.04	.44
2000	.32	1.09	.44
2001	.28	.98	.38
2002	.25	.94	.35
2003	.23	.88	.32
2004	.21	.89	.30
2005	.18	.86	.26
2006	.16	.76	.24
2007	.14	.70	.22

Nationwide statistics often reveal reduction in false alarms for the first several years after enactment and enforcement of a false alarm reduction ordinance begins. However, after the first few years, the numbers generally either level off with no further reduction or actually start to increase. Since the Montgomery County false alarm reduction program has been in effect, it has consistently reduced the false alarm dispatch rate (with the exception of 2000, which remained constant overall) and has done so for a full 12 years. Few, if any, other jurisdictions can boast such a phenomenal success rate.

Commercial false alarm dispatch rates have been reported as high as 4.0 and residential false alarm dispatch rates at 1.0 or above. A dispatch rate of 4.0 means that *every* alarm user has four actual responses *every* year. Using 2007 statistics, that would equate to 36,924 actual responses to alarm activations for *commercial alarm users alone*; a figure more than double the *total* responses for residential and commercial alarm users *combined* in 2007. It would also represent approximately 262,968 actual responses to alarm activations for *all* alarm users – an outrageous number by anyone’s standards.

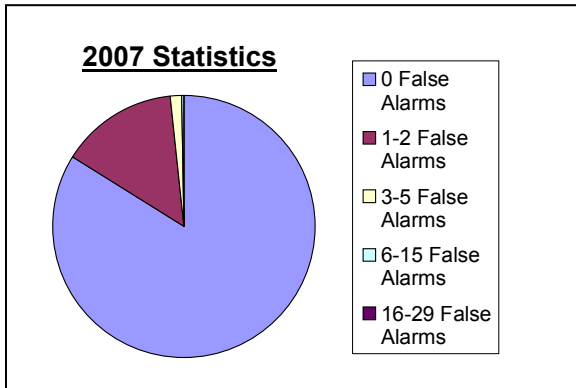
Assuming Montgomery County’s dispatch rate would have risen a modest amount to 2.0 without enforcement of the alarm law, police officers would have actually responded to 131,484 false alarm activations in 2007, which would represent an *888% increase* in response to false alarms. At \$90 per dispatch, those 131,484 alarm activations would require approximately 42 police officers to do absolutely nothing but respond to burglar alarms at a staggering cost of \$11,833,560. This is clearly a cost that no local jurisdiction can absorb.

The following pie charts (Graphs 3, 4 and 5) graphically depict the significant reductions in residential, non-residential and combined false alarm dispatch rates over the 12 year enforcement period.



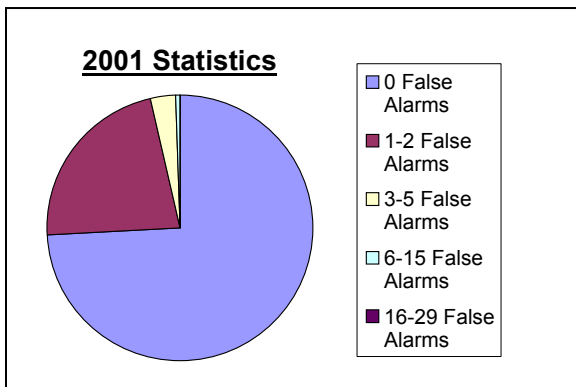
In 2007, an impressive 85.3% of all residential and commercial alarm users experienced no false alarms at all. **A total of 56,089 alarm users, had zero false alarm activations to which police officers responded in 2007.** The following pie graphs show that more alarm users (as a percentage of total alarm users for a given year) are achieving the zero false alarm threshold. This statistic, which is supported by the low false dispatch rate, is indicative of the success of the overall false alarm reduction program. These reductions become more significant when viewed with the steady increase in the number of alarm users each year.

Threshold Statistics



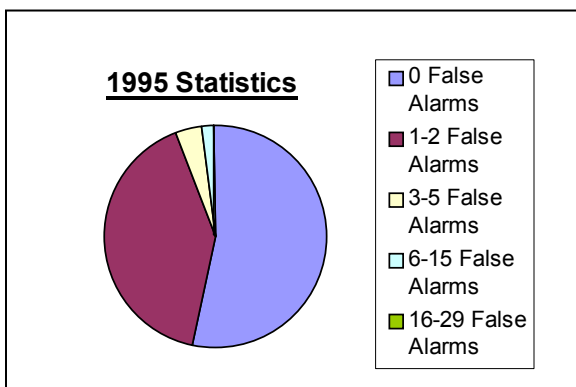
2007 Threshold Statistics	
False Alarms	Alarm Users
0	56,089
1-2	9,653
3-5	1,000
6-15	166
16-29	5

Total 2007 Alarm Users = 65,742



2001 Threshold Statistics	
False Alarms	Alarm Users
0	49,950
1-2	14,886
3-5	2,092
6-15	306
16-29	9

Total 2001 Alarm Users = 64,836



1995 Threshold Statistics	
False Alarms	Alarm Users
0	20,468
1-2	15,968
3-5	1,559
6-15	618
16-29	19

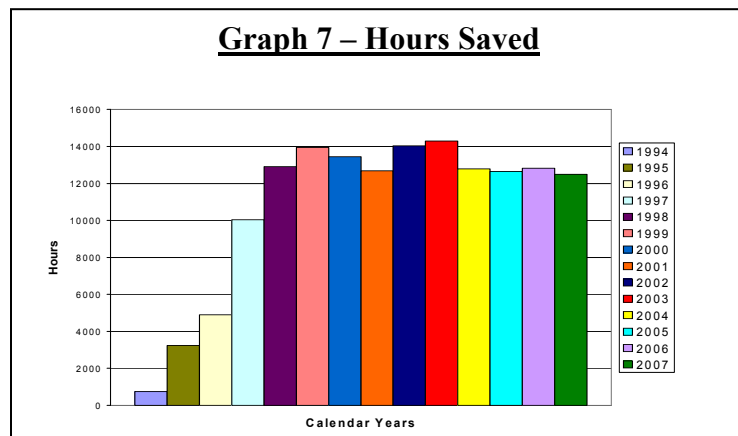
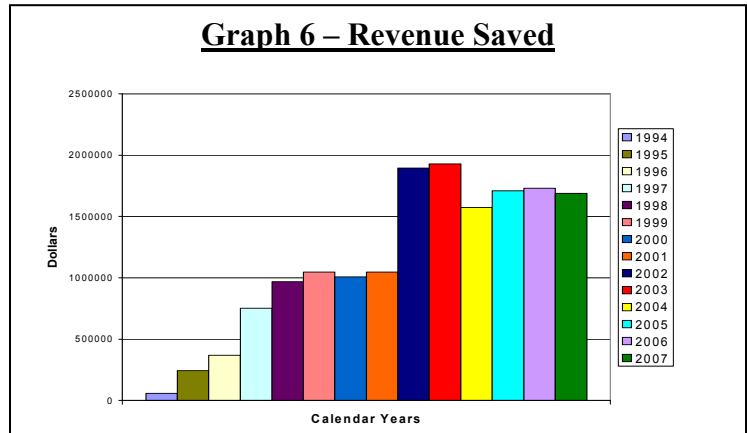
Total 1995 Alarm Users = 36,436

As a direct result of the FARS's strict enforcement of the alarm law, there were 18,751 alarm calls to which police officers were not required to respond in 2007. **This equates to savings in 2007 of approximately \$1,687,590 and 12,500 hours of police officer time, or 12.02 police work years.** (Monetary savings are based on a cost of \$90 per response. Work year savings are based on an average of 20 minutes per alarm response by two officers.) This timesaving is substantial, particularly when the department is being asked to do more with less each year.

The following graphs illustrate the revenues, hours and work years saved as a result of the false alarm reduction program.

Graph 6 shows that the actual revenue saved in 2007 as a result of police officers responding to 18,751 less false alarms was \$1,687,590. Since the FARS began enforcement of the alarm statute, the total revenue saved by Montgomery County has been \$16,014,340.

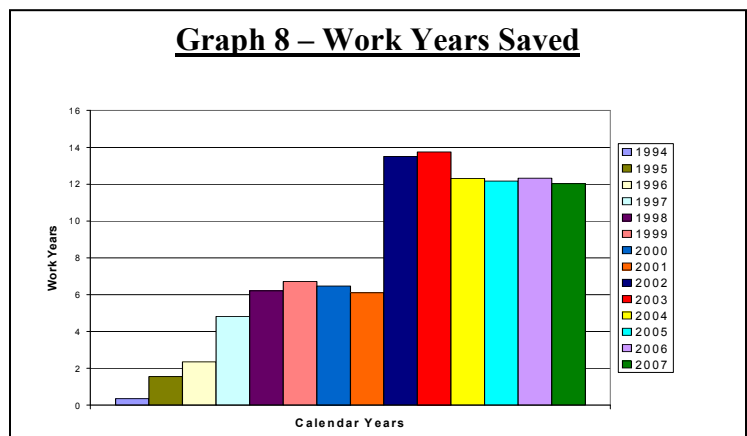
(The dramatic difference in 2002 savings and subsequent years is due to using a more realistic figure of \$90 per response, as opposed to \$55 in 2001 and \$50 for previous years.)



Graph 7 shows that the actual hours saved in 2007 as a result of police officers responding to 18,751 less false alarms was 12,500 hours. Since the FARS began enforcement of the alarm statute, Montgomery County has recovered 151,014 hours in police officer time.

Graph 8 shows that 12.02 actual work years were saved in 2007 as a result of enforcement of the alarm statute. Since enforcement began, Montgomery County has recovered a total of 110.63 work years of police officer time.

(The dramatic difference starting in 2002 vs. previous years is due to erroneously using a full 2080 hours as a work year measure between 1994 and 2001, which is not an accurate figure.)



The total savings in dollars, hours and work years since 1994 have been significant and are depicted in Chart 3 below. As stated previously in this report, absent strict enforcement of the alarm statute, Montgomery County would have **paid** more than \$11,000,000 in 2007 alone responding to false alarms. The \$16,014,340 savings to the county is, therefore, even more significant.

Chart 3 – Cumulative Savings

Year	Revenue Saved	Hours Saved	Work Years Saved
1994	\$ 55,750	743	.35
1995	\$ 242,750	3,236	1.56
1996	\$ 366,950	4,892	2.35
1997	\$ 752,850	10,038	4.82
1998	\$ 968,550	12,914	6.21
1999	\$1,046,600	13,954	6.71
2000	\$1,008,600	13,448	6.47
2001	\$1,046,430	12,684	6.10
2002	\$1,895,760	14,043	13.5
2003	\$1,928,790	14,301	13.75
2004	\$1,574,280	12,794	12.30
2005	\$1,708,740	12,657	12.17
2006	\$1,730,700	12,820	12.32
2007	\$1,687,590	12,500	12.02
TOTAL	\$16,014,340	151,014	110.63

Government Alarm Users

In calendar year 2007, the FARS had 551 registered federal, state and local government facilities, all of which were held to the same strict standards as all other alarm users. Of the 551 government alarm users, 118 or 21.4%, had at least one false alarm. Those 118 alarm users collectively had 220 false alarms. A total of 433 different government alarm users (78.6%) had **zero** false alarms, which is up almost two full percentage points from 2006 (76.8%). This reflects that government facilities still rank better than all other commercial alarm users, which is at 67.4%.

Chart 4 reflects the numbers for government alarm users only. The chart shows that six alarm government alarm users had five or more false alarms in 2007. This reflects a 50% decrease for this threshold, as 12 government alarm users experienced five or more false alarms in 2006. Five of those six alarm users, once again, represent one particular type of federal government facility. The FARS staff worked closely with those alarm users over the past year and were successful in dramatically reducing false alarms in those facilities. We will continue to work with them in 2008 to ensure even greater reductions.

Chart 4 – Government Alarm Users

# of False Alarms	# of Alarm Users - 1999	# of Alarm Users - 2001	# of Alarm Users - 2002	# of Alarm Users - 2003	# of Alarm Users - 2004	# of Alarm Users – 2005	# of Alarm Users - 2006	# of Alarm Users - 2007
0	332	355	404	400	354	424	431	433
1	72	50	69	74	94	71	80	64
2	22	33	22	17	34	24	27	33
3	13	5	10	2	12	7	7	13
4	2	4	3	3	9	3	4	2
5	1	2	0	0	3	3	4	1
6	0	1	3	1	3	2	3	4
7	1	2	2	0	3	3	0	0
8	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
9	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	0
10-13	1	0	1	0	2	4	3	0
14-21	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	1

Chart 4 is different from Charts 10-12, which appear later in this report, in that the number of alarm users at each threshold level is **not** included in the preceding level. For example, the chart reflects that 64 government alarm users had one false alarm and 33 government alarm users had two false alarms. The 33 at the two threshold are **not** included in the 64 count for one false alarm. Another way to view this report is that 64 government alarm users had one and only one false alarm. An additional 33 government alarm users had two and only two false alarms. An additional 13 government alarm users had three and only three false alarms and so on. Adding up the 2007 column will show the total number of government alarm users at 551.

Revenue

The following two charts reflect revenue collected by the FARS for alarm user registration and renewal fees, false alarm response fees, alarm business license and administrative fees, civil citations and appeal filing fees. The first chart covers *calendar* year 2007. The second chart covers *fiscal* year 07. The FY07 chart is included only as a reference, because budget projections are based on fiscal rather than calendar years. The more accurate chart is the calendar year 2007 chart, as false alarms and the resultant false alarm response fees, are calculated on a calendar year basis.

Chart 5 – Calendar Year Revenue

CALENDAR YEAR 2007	ACTUAL REVENUES
<u>Alarm User Registration Fees</u>	
Residential	\$153,120
Commercial	<u>29,380</u>
TOTAL	\$182,500
<u>Alarm User Registration Renewal Fees</u>	
Residential	\$230,898
Commercial	<u>35,940</u>
TOTAL	\$266,838
<u>False Alarm Response Fees</u>	
Residential	\$ 63,052
County Attorney Collections	<u>13,410</u>
Total Residential	\$ 76,462
Commercial	\$302,702
County Attorney Collections	<u>50,995</u>
Total Commercial	\$353,697
TOTAL	\$430,159
<u>Alarm Business Fees</u>	
License	\$ 74,380
Civil Citations	8,500
Administrative Fees	<u>839</u>
TOTAL	\$ 83,719
<u>Appeal Filing Fees</u>	
Residential	\$ 360
Commercial	<u>120</u>
TOTAL	\$ 480
<u>Alarm User Civil Citations</u>	
Residential	\$ 0
Commercial	<u>400</u>
TOTAL	\$ 400
GRAND TOTAL	\$964,096

Chart 6 – Fiscal Year Revenue

FISCAL YEAR 07	ACTUAL REVENUES
<u>Alarm User Registration Fees</u>	
Residential	\$137,400
Commercial	<u>24,350</u>
TOTAL	\$161,750
<u>Alarm User Registration Renewal Fees</u>	
Residential	\$219,030
Commercial	<u>28,810</u>
TOTAL	\$247,840
<u>False Alarm Response Fees</u>	
Residential	\$ 64,962
County Attorney Collections	<u>14,150</u>
Total Residential	\$ 79,112
Commercial	\$357,647
County Attorney Collections	<u>50,705</u>
Total Commercial	\$408,352
TOTAL	\$487,464
<u>Alarm Business Fees</u>	
License	\$ 73,320
Civil Citations	8,500
Administrative Fees	<u>966</u>
TOTAL	\$ 82,786
<u>Appeal Filing Fees</u>	
Residential	\$ 420
Commercial	<u>120</u>
TOTAL	\$ 540
<u>Alarm User Civil Citations</u>	
Residential	\$ 0
Commercial	<u>\$ 900</u>
TOTAL	\$ 900
GRAND TOTAL	\$981,280

Collection of false alarm response fees is always a priority for the FARS. Strict enforcement of this aspect of the alarm law clearly shows that Montgomery County is serious about false alarms. The FARS collection rate in 2007 was an extraordinary 93.6% of all false alarm response fees billed. This is up from last years collection figure of 92.0%. The suspension of police response provision in Chapter 3A, Alarms, for failure to remit false alarm response fees greatly enhances the FARS’s ability to collect on unpaid bills.

The following chart reflects the amount billed for false alarm response fees in 2007 versus the amount collected for both residential and commercial alarm users. Please note that the “collected” amount in the following chart reflects payments made against false alarms that occurred in 2007. The actual collection of monies for those calendar year 2007 false alarms extended into calendar year 2008, and, therefore, reflects different totals from the Calendar Year Revenue Chart.

**Chart 7 – Calendar Year 2007 Billed vs. Collected
False Alarm Response Fees**

False Alarm Response Fees	Billed	Collected*	Past Due (>30 & <51 days overdue)	Delinquent (>50 days overdue)
Commercial	\$303,350	\$286,775	\$4,500	\$11,925
Residential	\$69,700	\$62,400	\$1,175	\$6,100
Total	\$373,050	\$349,175	\$5,675	\$18,025

*Represents fees collected in 2007 and 2008 against false alarm response fees billed in 2007.

The FARS is in the process of attempting to collect the past due amounts listed above. The FARS has sent overdue notices to all affected alarm users. The \$18,025 listed above has been referred to the Office of the County Attorney for collection and the affected alarm users have been placed in a non-response status until payment is received.

General Statistics

Chart 8 shows false alarm reduction statistics from 1994, when the new alarm law was in effect but false alarm response fees were not yet being imposed, through 2007. The chart shows the actual number of requests for dispatch, the number of calls that were ultimately dispatched and to which response was made, requests where no response was required or was refused, verified calls and the percentage of false alarm reduction. Verified calls include actual criminal activity, as well as suspicious situations such as an open door with no other evidence of criminal activity. Circumstances under which no response may occur include cancellation of response by the alarm company, duplicate calls for the same alarm activation, blanket cancellations by supervisory police personnel and refusals where the alarm company or alarm user was in a violation status.

Chart 8 – False Alarm Reduction

Year	Requests for Dispatch	Dispatched	No Response	Verified Calls	% Reduction	% Reduction From Base
1994	43,936	42,821	1,115*			
1995	40,967	35,624	4,855	488	-16.8%	-15.7%
1996	40,534	32,390	7,339	805	-9.1%	-24.3%
1997	45,791	29,219	15,057	1,515	-9.8%	-32.0%
1998	46,839	25,877	19,371	1,591	-11.4%	-39.6%
1999	48,434	25,951	20,932	1,551	+003%	-39.4%
2000	48,603	26,877	20,172	1,554	+035%	-37.2%
2001	45,702	24,855	19,026	1,821	-7.5%	-41.9%
2002	46,409	23,402	21,064	1,943	-5.8%	-45.3%
2003	44,673	21,452	21,431	1,790	-8.3%	-49.9%
2004	38,248	19,190	17,492	1,566	-10.5%	-55.2%
2005	36,998	16,443	18,986	1,569	-14.3%	-61.6%
2006	36,751	15,652	19,230	1,869	-4.8%	-64.4%
2007	35,221	14,655	18,751	1,815	-6.4%	-66.6%

*Does not include dispatch vs. non-dispatch or verified calls for January, February or March, 1994, as statistics for those months are not available.

Chart 9 reflects the number of alarm users each year since 1994. Alarm user registrations have more than doubled since implementation and enforcement of the false alarm reduction program began in 1994. The FARS received 5,962 new alarm user registration forms in 2007. This increase, coupled with the 66.6% decrease in alarm activations to which police officers must respond each year, is truly remarkable. The success and results of this program are what make it a model for other municipalities across the country.

Chart 9 – Alarm Users

Year	Residential	Commercial	Combined
1994	N/A	N/A	29,756
1995	39,398	7,049	36,436
1996	34,048	8,102	42,150
1997	39,192	8,879	48,008
1998	44,827	9,348	54,175
1999	48,654	9,489	58,143
2000	51,743	9,591	61,334
2001	55,024	9,812	64,836
2002	57,026	9,499	66,525
2003	57,223	9,241	66,474
2004	54,960	8,788	63,748
2005	55,095	8,875	63,970
2006	55,752	9,083	64,835
2007	56,511	9,231	65,742

Chart 9 does not reflect an increase of overall alarm users by 5,962 (the number of new registered alarm users), because some alarm users each year move out of the area or remove their alarm systems and are no longer required to have an alarm user registration. Additionally, with alarm user registration renewal, the FARS is much better able to keep the alarm user database current by removing those alarm users, who no longer have an alarm system or have moved. This allows the FARS to perform statistical analysis using more accurate numbers, which provides for more meaningful and accurate reporting.

The following charts depict the number of alarm users that had a specific number of false alarms from 1995 through 2007 for select years. The charts also show the percentage of change between 2006 vs. 2007, as well as the percentage of change between the base year of 1995 and 2007, which shows the reduction of false alarms since inception of the program. Chart 10 shows residential alarm users. Chart 11 shows commercial alarm users, and Chart 12 reflects total alarm users (both residential and commercial combined).

In 2007, 56,089 alarm users had ZERO false alarms to which police officers were required to respond. This represents 85.3% of all alarm users, which is up from 2006 statistics where 84.5% of alarm users had zero false alarms. Therefore, the most compelling statistic in these charts is in the number of alarm users that appear on the 0 row (meaning they have had no false alarms for the entire calendar year).

Charts 10-12 are calculated slightly different from the commensurate Chart 4, which reflects government alarm users only. The total number of alarm users for each category will be reflected in the zero and one false alarm rows. Those alarm users, who had two false alarms are included in the number that had one false alarm. Those alarm users with three false alarms, are included in the number that had two and one false alarms respectively. For example, Chart 10

shows that 49,872 alarm users had zero false alarms and 6,639 alarm users had one false alarm. Those two lines add up to the total number of residential alarm users (56,511). Looking further, of the 6,639 alarm users, who had one false alarm, 1,171 *of those alarm users* went on to have a second false alarm. Of those 1,171, alarm users, 244 went on to have a third false alarm. The column proceeds in the same fashion throughout the entire chart.

The number of residential alarm users, who had no false alarms from 2006 to 2007, rose by 2.2%. As a percentage of the total, 88.3% of residential alarm users had no false alarms in 2007, which reflects an actual increase of .7% over 2006. Keep in mind that when viewing any of the statistical data in this report, it is important to look at those numbers in relation to the total number of alarm users. Since 1995, 175.3% more residential alarm users were able to remain within the zero false alarm threshold.

Chart 10
Residential Alarm Users
With Specific Numbers of False Alarms

# of False Alarms	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	2006	2007	% Change (06-07)	% Base Change (95-07)
0	18116	28428	37384	44044	47130	47510	48802	49872	+2.2%	+175.3%
1	11271	10701	11270	10980	10103	7585	6950	6639	-4.5%	-41.1%
2	4153	3516	3292	2950	2306	1392	1302	1171	-10.1%	-71.8%
3	1171	371	985	793	565	327	269	244	-9.3%	-79.2%
4	668	333	261	217	143	99	64	57	-10.9%	-91.5%
5	292	106	89	68	38	30	17	15	-11.8%	-94.9%
6	128	32	32	21	14	12	6	6	0	-95.3%
7	50	13	10	7	9	3	1	3	+200%	-94.0%
8	19	5	2	4	5	1	1	1	0	-94.7%
9	9	1	2	1	2	0	1	1	0	-88.9%
10	7	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	-100%	-100%
11	6	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%
12	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%
13	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%
14	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
15	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
16	1	0	1	0		0	0	0	0	-100%

In 1995, one residential alarm user had 16 separate false alarms. The highest number of false alarms by a residential alarm user in 2007 was nine, which reflects a 30.8% decrease in the threshold alarms for residential alarm users.

The number of commercial alarm users, who had no false alarms from 2006 to 2007, rose 4.5%. As a percentage of the total, 67.4% of commercial alarm users had no false alarms in 2007, which is up from 65.5% in 2005. Keep in mind that when viewing any of the statistical data in this report, it is important to look at those numbers in relation to the total number of alarm users. Since 1995, 164.3% more commercial alarm users were able to remain within the zero false alarm threshold.

Chart 11
Commercial Alarm Users With Specific Numbers of False Alarms

# of False Alarms	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	2006	2007	% Change (06-07)	% Base Change (95-07)
0	2352	4820	5416	5906	5632	5730	5951	6217	+4.5%	+164.3%
1	4697	4059	4073	3906	3609	3145	3132	3014	-3.8%	-35.8%
2	2699	2457	2334	2256	1864	1502	1497	1455	-2.8%	-46.1%
3	1435	837	1347	1299	1014	853	816	756	-7.3%	-47.3%
4	1113	770	781	744	570	473	478	447	-6.5%	-59.8%
5	763	445	475	459	359	305	287	263	-8.4%	-65.6%
6	490	292	287	285	228	186	193	160	-17.1%	-67.3%
7	331	177	176	185	139	121	136	98	-27.9%	-58.9%
8	217	123	112	125	98	85	95	71	-25.3%	-67.3%
9	145	80	80	85	76	63	74	48	-35.1%	-66.9%
10	109	67	58	48	48	43	54	31	-42.6%	-71.5%
11	75	45	42	35	28	30	39	22	-43.6%	-70.7%
12	49	32	28	25	20	21	33	15	-54.5%	-69.4%
13	35	17	18	22	12	16	22	11	-50.0%	-68.6%
14	30	11	13	18	7	13	18	8	-55.5%	-73.3%
15	24	8	10	11	5	8	16	7	-56.2%	-70.8%
16	18	5	5	9	4	8	12	5	-58.3%	-72.2%
17	11	5	1	8	3	7	7	4	-42.8%	-63.6%
18	11	3	0	7	3	6	5	3	-40.0%	-72.7%
19	8	1	0	4	2	6	4	2	-50.0%	-75.0%
20	5	1	0	3	1	4	2	0	-100%	-100%
21	5	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	-100%	-100%
22	4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%
23	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%
24	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%
25	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
26	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
27	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
28	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
29	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%

Dramatic decreases are seen in commercial alarm users, who experienced 10 or more false alarms in 2007 over 2006. This shows that the major offender project, which is a staple of the false alarm reduction program, continues to reflect positive results.

The total number of alarm users, who had no false alarms from 2006 to 2007, rose by 2.4%. As a percentage of the total, a full 85.3% of residential and commercial alarm users combined had no false alarms in 2007. This is up significantly from 2006 when 81.6% of combined alarm users had no false alarms. Keep in mind that when viewing any of the statistical data in this report, it is important to look at those numbers in relation to the total number of alarm users. Since 1995, 174.0% more residential and commercial alarm users combined are able to remain within the zero false alarm threshold.

Chart 12
Both Residential and Commercial Alarm Users With Specific Numbers of False Alarms

# of False Alarms	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	2006	2007	% Change (06-07)	% Base Change (95-07)
0	20468	33248	42800	49950	52762	53240	54753	56089	+2.4%	+174.0%
1	15968	14760	15343	14886	13712	10730	10082	9653	-4.2%	-39.5%
2	6852	5973	5626	5206	4170	2894	2799	2626	-6.2%	-61.7%
3	2606	1208	2332	2092	1579	1180	1085	1000	-7.8%	-61.6%
4	1781	1103	1042	991	713	572	542	504	-7.0%	-71.7%
5	1055	551	564	527	397	335	304	278	-8.5%	-73.6%
6	618	324	319	306	242	198	199	166	-16.6%	-73.1%
7	381	190	186	192	148	124	137	101	-26.3%	-73.5%
8	236	128	114	129	103	86	96	72	-25.0%	-69.5%
9	154	81	82	86	78	63	75	49	-34.7%	-68.1%
10	116	67	59	48	49	43	55	31	-42.6%	-71.5%
11	81	45	43	35	28	30	40	22	-43.6%	-70.7%
12	52	32	29	25	20	21	34	15	-54.5%	-69.4%
13	36	17	19	22	12	16	23	11	-50.0%	-68.6%
14	32	11	14	18	7	13	18	8	-55.5%	-73.3%
15	26	8	11	11	5	8	16	7	-56.2%	-70.8%
16	19	5	6	9	4	8	12	5	-58.3%	-72.2%
17	11	5	1	8	3	7	7	4	-42.8%	-63.6%
18	11	3	0	7	3	6	5	3	-40.0%	-72.7%
19	8	1	0	4	2	6	4	2	-50.0%	-75.0%
20	5	1	0	3	1	4	2	0	-100%	-100%
21	5	1	0	2	0	1	1	0	-100%	-100%
22	4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%
23	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%
24	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	-100%	-100%
25	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
26	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
27	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
28	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%
29	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100%

Major Accomplishments

City of Takoma Park

The City of Takoma Park adopted Chapter 3A, Alarms, of the Montgomery County Code in 2002. The alarm law was not enforced in the City of Takoma Park because the FARS had no way to retrieve alarm data from their CAD system. On July 1, 2007, the City of Takoma Park began using the Montgomery County Police Department's 9-1-1 equipment and software, which allowed us access to the data we needed to enforce the alarm law. Between July 1 and December 31, 2007, the FARS engaged in an extensive educational campaign designed to inform all affected parties of the Montgomery County alarm law, how it works, and responsibilities under the law for each of them. Affected parties included City of Takoma Park alarm users, any alarm companies doing business in Takoma Park, the City of Takoma Park Police force and their 9-1-1 operators. A phased approach was utilized, which gave six months lead time to allow for the registration and education of all alarm users before enforcement of the alarm law began.

FARS employees also worked closely with their contract software vendor to modify the existing False Alarm Tracking and Billing (FATB) custom software program to accommodate the inclusion of City of Takoma Park alarm users. The FATB system now has the capability to identify those alarm users, who are within the city limits of Takoma Park, and to provide separate statistical reports for them. This will allow FARS staff to provide data to officials in Takoma Park about false alarm reduction within the city limits.

Considerable work went into identifying alarm users, who were exempt in the FATB system and through CAD records, who are now subject to the mandates of the alarm law. FARS staff sent appropriate letters to each advising of the change in enforcement and requiring them to register their alarm systems. Three separate letters were sent to alarm users and alarm companies that are licensed in Montgomery County. Additionally, FARS staff worked with the Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association to ensure notification was made to all of their members through newsletters and e-mail flash notifications. FARS staff also provided hands-on training to the City of Takoma Park 9-1-1 operators and supervisors on how to record and dispatch alarm calls for service to provide the greatest opportunity for enforcement.

On January 1, 2008, the FARS began strict enforcement of the alarm law for City of Takoma Park alarm users. A base-line was created with data from the last six months of 2007, and the FARS will be able to provide the City with statistical data next year on the effectiveness of the alarm law within the city limits.

False Alarm Reduction Section Moves

The FARS moved from Rockville to Gaithersburg on January 12, 2007. The more than year-long effort culminated in a successful move, with very little down time for the office, because of the extensive attention to detail and pre-move work that was accomplished by FARS and other Police Department staff. This was a huge undertaking and involved numerous

individuals and departments within county government to ensure a smooth transition from one space to another. Staff dealt with issues regarding new telephones and training (we previously had Executone phones and were not part of the PBX system), registration forms and brochures for alarm companies to hand out with the new address and phone number, new furniture at the least amount of cost, space configuration (moved to smaller space) and mail handling. Other larger issues dealt with ensuring that our electronic interface with CAD continued to work and that the appropriate computer equipment and lines were installed in the new facility to allow that connectivity to exist. FARS staff had great cooperation from DTS and ECC in this venture, for which they are very grateful. Staff was required to change certain business rules to accommodate things like dealing with a different bank (one that required us to travel instead of just walking to a different floor of the same building) and when and how mail was delivered and processed. Despite numerous setbacks and challenges, the FARS move was completed on time, with little disruption of services and at a minimum of expense.

Training

Regional Public Safety “Users” Group

The regional meetings with alarm coordinators and staff in the Washington-Metropolitan area have continued to be very successful. Regional meetings are generally held every two months, with a different jurisdiction hosting each time. Highlights include:

- We have increased participation in the meetings and have even held joint meetings with public safety and the Maryland Burglar and Fire Alarm Association to discuss areas of mutual concern.
- We continue to work on passing two new bills in the General Assembly dealing with enhanced call verification (ECV) and alarm technician training.
- Worked with a local alarm company on creating a metropolitan area response protocol for a new type of alarm system that is generally applied to appliances in new homes that are up for sale.
- Instrumental in getting greater participation by public safety employees with the local alarm association.

Emergency Communications Center

The first point of contact with the Police Department when attempting to request dispatch to an alarm activation is with the Emergency Communications Center (ECC). While police officers only responded to 14,655 requests for dispatch in 2007, the ECC telecommunicators and dispatchers handled all 35,221 attempts to dispatch. It is critical that ECC personnel obtain specific training to handle these types of calls and gain a greater understanding of why we do what we do and how it will impact them in their new positions. For the past six years, FARS staff have provided specialized training to all new ECC recruits as part of their overall training. The training includes an overview of the alarm law and executive regulation, why the law and regulation were enacted, the scope of the problem, ECC and FARS standard operating procedures, review of actual calls and what was done correctly or incorrectly, and discussion of the successes of the false alarm reduction program. Several current FARS staff have served as

trainers for the ECC recruit classes, and found them to be extremely worthwhile in helping to ensure a cohesive approach within the Police Department to the alarm management issue.

Public Relations

FARS staff continue to assist agencies throughout North America implement and enforce alarm management programs in their communities. They are often called upon to provide their expertise either in answering specific questions about policy/procedure or overarching issues such provisions to include in an alarm ordinance or regulation and the difference between the two. In 2007 alone, FARS staff provided assistance to Cobb County, Georgia; Louisville, Kentucky; Georgetown, Texas; Raleigh, North Carolina; Washington, D.C.; London, Ontario, Canada; and the Washington County (Maryland) Sheriff's Office. FARS staff also provided interviews to *Security Sales and Integration Magazine* and *Smart Money Magazine* on false alarm reduction issues. FARS staff also performed outreach and education to Montgomery County citizens, specifically through senior citizen forums, neighborhood watch programs, homeowner association meetings, and participation at district station open houses. These types of public relations effort helps to keep Montgomery County in the forefront of alarm management and allows us to continue promoting our very successful false alarm reduction program.

Revamped Brochures

Staff completely revamped and republished two information brochures; one dealing with alarm user and alarm company responsibilities and provisions of the alarm law and one dealing with false alarm prevention techniques. The brochures are now easier to read, and have been updated to include the most current information on false alarm prevention. The brochures were distributed to all licensed alarm companies, along with our new registration forms, which they are responsible for providing to their customers.

Major Offender Program

FARS staff successfully increased the number of accounts handled through the Major Offender Program, with a greater emphasis on large corporate accounts. FARS staff identified and worked with 56 different alarm users, who were experiencing false alarm problems. Of the 42 commercial accounts the FARS's included in the Program, only 4 had three or more false alarms after staff worked with them to identify and rectify their false alarm problems. None of the 14 residential accounts FARS staff dealt with had any false alarms after intervention, and all obtained the required inspections. Additionally, staff continued its more aggressive campaign to reach problem alarm users by making cold calls and speaking with management on site.

As part of the FARS's Major Offender Project, staff also focused on ensuring that alarm users, who had six or more false alarms, obtained the upgrade required by law. This upgrade requires alarm users to update their alarm systems if they have excessive false alarms. These upgrades help to reduce and/or eliminate false alarms. Failure to perform the upgrade can result in the issuance of a Class B \$100 civil citation. FARS staff continued an initiative to garner

greater compliance with this provision of the statute. An initial letter is sent to alarm users when they have their sixth false alarm giving 21 days to have the upgrade performed and a signed upgrade certificate submitted to the FARS. If no upgrade is received within the 21-day time period, a second letter is sent advising that a civil citation will be issued should the certificate not be forthcoming. A total of 151 letters were sent to residential and commercial alarm users. As a result of that second letter, 44 upgrade certificates were received. An additional 47 alarm users had no further false alarms for the entire year after the second contact by the FARS. Five civil citations were issued; three were paid, one is still pending, and one was cancelled as the false alarm occurred under a previous owner.

Enforcement

FARS staff continued its efforts to acquire greater compliance by alarm companies through the issuance of Class A civil citations for violations of Chapter 3A, Alarms. A total of 20 civil citations were issued for failure to cease requesting dispatch on customers in a violation status and not providing the legally mandated information when requesting dispatch. Each year, we are required to issue fewer and fewer civil citations to ensure compliance with the alarm law, which demonstrates a positive movement toward conformity. The number of citations required in 2006 for violations was down again from 106 in 2001, 87 in 2002, 49 in 2003, 48 in 2004, 31 in 2005 and 22 in 2006. This shows that most alarm companies are complying with the provisions of the alarm law, and our goal is to have zero circumstances in which the imposition of civil citations are necessary.

Collection Efforts

When an alarm user fails to pay a false alarm response fee, the FARS advises the alarm user's alarm company that it may no longer request dispatch for that user and refers the account to the Office of the County Attorney for collection action. In 2007, the FARS referred 503 different alarm user accounts to the Office of the County Attorney for collection of outstanding/delinquent fees that totaled \$67,160.

Additionally, the Office of the County Attorney files suit in District Court against those alarm users, who do not pay their response fees despite both the FARS and the County Attorney's Office best collection efforts. A total of 201 suits were filed in District Court in 2007, with 171 of those alarm users paying all fees due prior to the trial date.

Hall of Fame for FARS Director

FARS Director Norma Beaubien was inducted into the *Security Sales & Integration* Hall of Fame during a ceremony that took place on March 27, 2007 in Las Vegas, Nevada. She is the first ever public safety professional to be so honored. The SSI Hall of Fame was launched in 2004 with the induction of 25 industry figures and was established to enshrine those people whose distinguished careers have helped shape today's electronic security industry. Beaubien's selection was determined by nominations from past Hall of Fame inductees, members of the SSI Editorial Advisory Board and other industry sources. She was recognized for her work in

Montgomery County to achieve the lowest false alarm rates as a result of her cooperative efforts with the alarm industry, her work to establish and grow the False Alarm Reduction Association and her consistent outreach to the alarm industry in that role, and her work as an Installation Quality Board member in growing that program. Also instrumental was her dedication to ensuring the success of the Police Dispatch Quality Award program, a joint effort between public safety and the alarm industry, as well as her past service on the National Burglar and Fire Alarm Association Board and as a speaker at ISC shows, IACP conventions, and local and national alarm industry conferences. Beaubien was one of three inducted in the Class of 2007 and was featured in a special report in the February 2007 issue of *Security Sales & Integration* magazine.