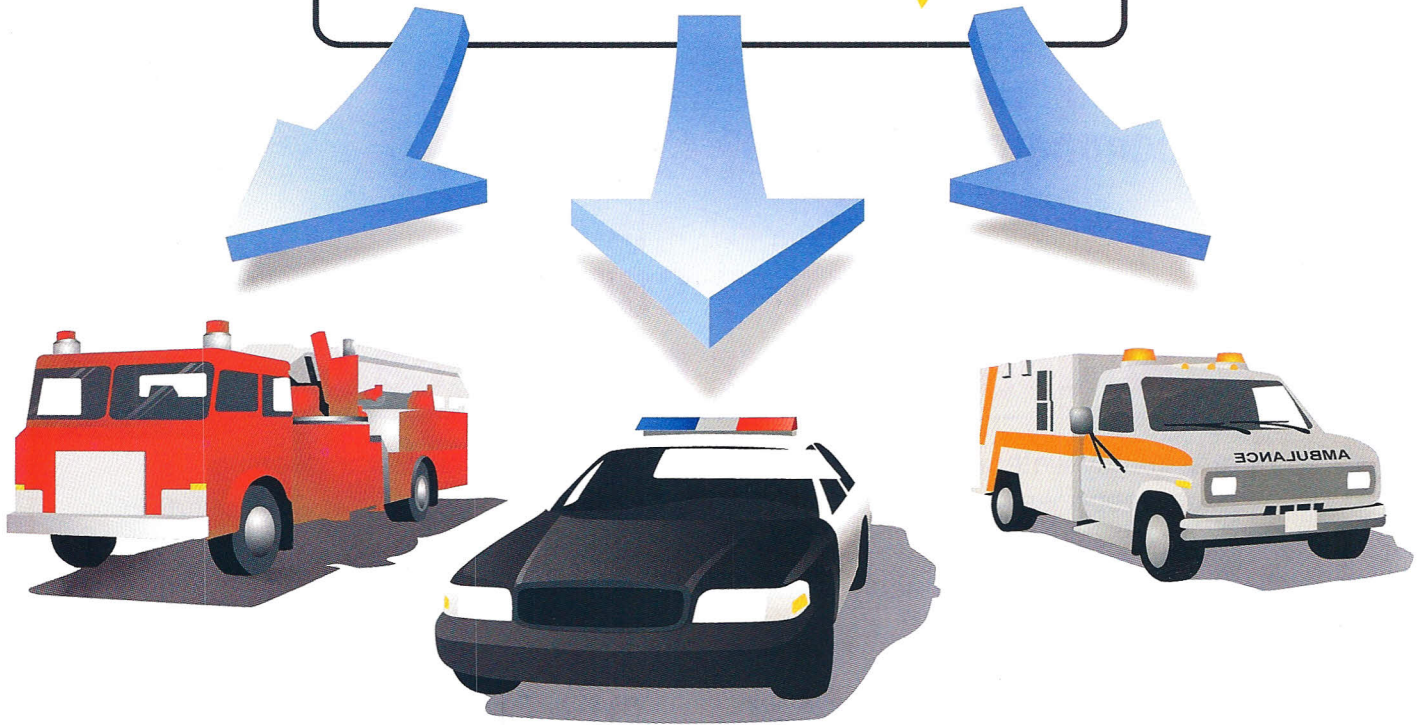


Emergency Response Procedures

Residence: John & Mary Smith

In the Event a Security Alarm is Triggered

1. Call the Residence
2. Call John Smith's Cellular Phone
3. Dispatch the Police Department
4. Call Next Door Neighbor



Are All Alarm Monitoring Security Providers the Same?

by Mirella H.

No matter what the current state of the economy, our first priority is, and always will be, the safety of our property and most importantly our loved ones. With approximately five million homes—nearly 1 out of every 20—being burglarized every year across the United States, owning and operating a home alarm system is one of the most effective ways to ensure you are taking steps toward protecting your two most precious commodities—your family and your home.

When Shopping For Your Alarm System...Buyer Beware

Beware the words "free alarm system." Be sure you have ownership of your alarm equipment at the end of your contract. Many of these plans trap the buyer into a three year or longer contract, which in effect means you are leasing the equipment and it is not free.

Beware three to five year contracts. It is important you do not enter into a long-term contract in case you become dissatisfied with your alarm monitoring provider and have the need to cancel your service. These contracts are designed to trap you into a long-term commitment with no escape.

Beware proprietary alarm systems. Be sure your alarm company is installing universal equipment. Universal equipment can be monitored by any alarm monitoring facility, which gives you the freedom to choose from any alarm monitoring provider.

In short, the desired results when shopping for your alarm system would be to separate the cost of your alarm system from the cost of your alarm monitoring.

Alarm monitoring is an essential component of an effective alarm system. Nationwide studies have shown that having an alarm system monitored by a professional security company increases safety and deters theft.

When shopping for your alarm monitoring service provider, it is essential to seek out a UL listed facility that provides uninterrupted alarm monitoring services 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. It is important to note that all UL listed alarm service providers must operate under the same strict regulations and are all regularly inspected by the UL organization.

When an alarm is triggered by your alarm system, the signal will be received by the Central Station within 25 seconds. Upon receiving the alarm signal, an alarm operator will immediately initiate your protection process. It is important to note and, in fact, recommended

that you, the customer, choose whatever instructions suit you and your family's specific needs. It is the alarm service provider's job to ensure your exact instructions are carried out in order to avoid false alarm dispatches.

It is further important to note that you may vary your instructions according to the device signal that is received by your provider. For example, your instructions for a fire alarm signal may read: dispatch fire department immediately and then call key holders. Your instructions for a burglar alarm signal may read call my cell, then call my neighbor, and then dispatch authorities. In short, your instructions may be as specific as you require them to be. An example of a protection process for the Smith family is illustrated in the graphic on page 52.

Armed now with the knowledge that all UL listed monitoring facilities must follow UL guidelines, you may be wondering why does one service



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provider charge \$35 per month and its competitor charge only \$9.99 per month when the delivery of service is the same? This is one instance where the old adage "you get what you pay for" does not compute.

Those service providers who offer your alarm monitoring at a lower, more affordable monthly rate have eliminated their billing processes and/or equipped their facilities with the most advanced technology that operates at a fraction of the cost and/or hired employees versus dealers and subcontractors in order to eliminate the middlemen. In short, there are many cost saving measures that can be placed into effect in order to reduce company overheads without affecting the quality or the delivery of service. Those reductions result in lower monthly monitoring rates. The companies that choose to be good corporate citizens pass those savings back to you, the customer.

In order to demonstrate how dramatic these savings can be when applied to volume discounting, we refer you to Parkside Townhomes Homeowners Association in Boynton Beach, Florida. They switched their alarm monitoring provider three years ago. Parkside is comprised of 271 units and the association was paying more than \$20 per month per unit. Upon their conversion to an alarm provider offering \$9.99 per month per unit, their annual savings (\$10 savings x 271 units x 12 months) equals \$32,520 each and every year. This totals a savings to the association of more than \$162,600 in five years.

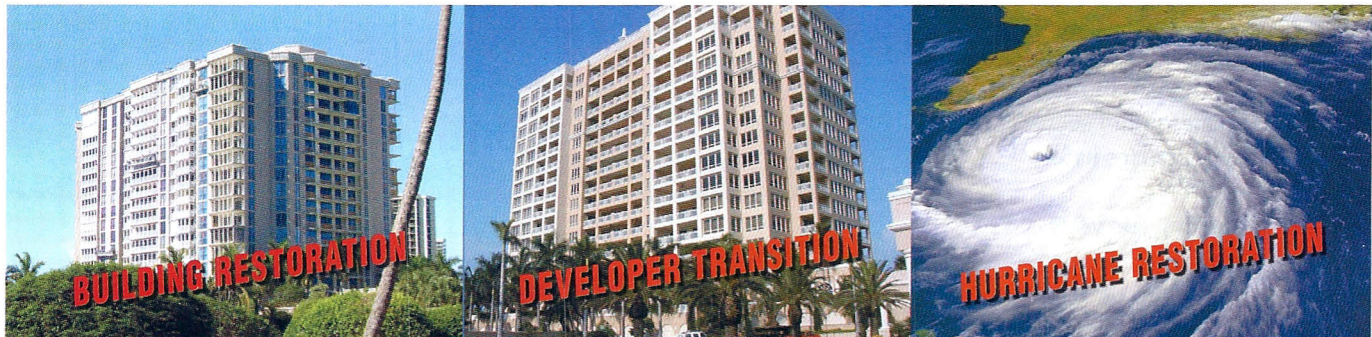
By proactively seeking out innovative ways to reduce the budget for Parkside Townhomes, their property manager, Phil Dominick, from Banyan Property Management was able to effectively cut the alarm monitoring

expenses by more than 50 percent and can now allocate the \$162,600 savings and apply them to other projects. This is a win-win situation for the residents at Parkside.

In short, security and savings are attainable; it is important to shop and compare service providers; and if you have ownership of your equipment, you are not tied down to your alarm monitoring provider.

Keep your family and your possessions safe. Lock your doors, arm your alarm system, hire a monitoring facility that will respond to signals from your home alarm system... and sleep tight.

Mirella H. is sales manager with The Monitoring Center. For more information, visit www.themonitoringcenter.com. ■



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