

Enhanced Call Verification for the Consumer

The burglar alarm industry is encouraging alarm customers to adopt a process called Enhanced Call Verification (ECV). This overview was developed to provide alarm owners information on ECV and how to take advantage of a program that will reduce law enforcement dispatch to invalid alarms and enhance the effectiveness of your alarm system

THE HISTORY: More than a decade ago the industry, in conjunction with law enforcement, developed a process of verification by which the alarm company called the premise and asked for a pass code prior to requesting a dispatch from law enforcement. This procedure has been effective in eliminating more than 75 percent of the dispatches to invalid alarm activations. The challenge now is to implement a program that will further reduce dispatches to invalid alarms.

WHY ENHANCED CALL VERIFICATION?: There has been a large increase in the number of properties, both residential and non-residential, that have installed burglar alarm systems to provided safety and security. Studies have shown that the vast majority of requests for police dispatch to invalid alarm activations are caused by user error that can be corrected.

ENHANCED CALL VERIFICATION: At the request of law enforcement, the industry began a series of tests with the verification process. These tests involved calling additional contact numbers prior to the requesting a police dispatch. The tests showed reductions in dispatch requests of between 30 percent and 50 percent. ECV has the potential to deliver significant and immediate reductions in dispatches to alarm activations. As an alarm owner, ECV provides you an additional level of contact when your alarm is activated and increased confidence that a police dispatch will be made to a valid alarm.

THE PROCESS: Enhanced Call Verification procedures are used **only for burglary signals**. Panic, holdup and other user initiated alarms will still be handled per the procedure that you currently have in place with your alarm company.

When your alarm company deploys ECV, they will be calling two phone numbers to verify prior to dispatching. On average, this will delay the request for dispatch by less than 30 seconds. When available, the second number called should be a cellular number since most false dispatches occur while turning the system either on or off. It is not the intention of this procedure to have you guess as to whether to dispatch the police when you are not at the premises. Since these alarms are occurring during the on/off process, it makes sense that someone is either at the premise or has recently left. In this case, you will have sufficient information to make a decision on when to request a dispatch of law enforcement.

If you are not at the premise, or have not recently left, or do not have additional information (such as service personnel on the premise), then the decision should always be for the alarm company to dispatch law enforcement.

GOOD CITIZENSHIP: Implementing ECV serves the community by conserving resources and is part of being a responsible operator of your alarm system. If there is a need for more training, you should contact your alarm company and request additional instruction. If there is an ongoing problem with the equipment that is causing dispatches to invalid alarms, then the system should be serviced to eliminate the problem.