
CITY OF KELOWNA
MEMORANDUM

Date: January 12, 2004
File No.: 4000-01

To: City Manager

From: Licence & Bylaw Enforcement Supervisor

Subject: Security Alarm Reduction - Bylaw Review

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report of the Licence and Bylaw Enforcement Supervisor, dated January 12, 2004 be received for information of Council;

AND THAT staff prepare a bylaw based on the draft Security Alarm System Bylaw attached to the staff report, for reading consideration by Council.

HISTORY / BACKGROUND

In 1996 Inspector Smith of the Kelowna RCMP began a review of the number of false alarms received by and responded to by the RCMP with the result that a request was forwarded to Kelowna City Hall to consider the implementation of a False Alarm Bylaw to regulate alarms within the City.

On July 19, 1996 a draft bylaw was completed and circulated to the City of Kelowna Corporate Services. The draft bylaw was primarily based on the City of Vancouver's bylaw with sections incorporated from the cities of Victoria and Burnaby bylaws. Between November 1996 and December 1998 the draft bylaw and RCMP operations were continually reviewed and amendments made as necessary.

On January 18, 1999 the City of Kelowna enacted the "Security Alarm Systems Bylaw No. 7962" to regulate the use of monitored security alarm systems, as there had been a marked increase in the amount of false alarms. It had been determined that these false alarms constituted an unnecessary emergency police response and that this posed a threat to the safety of the police and public.

On January 31, 2000 a meeting was held between the RCMP and City Bylaw Supervisor to determine the success and implementation of the bylaw. The Bylaw Supervisor was advised that the bylaw had not been implemented as the RCMP had not yet been able to obtain appropriate software to run the program. Between February 6, 2000 and May 26, 2000 joint meetings were continued to resolve various operational and implementational concerns. The current software is now outdated and will require the purchase of up-to-date programs.

On June 2, 2000 members from the RCMP (Steve Foster / Arlene Blanchette) attended an alarm summit in Vancouver sponsored by the Vancouver Police Department and the Canadian Alarm and Security Association (C.A.N.A.S.A.). During the presentation it became evident that the bylaw enacted by the City of Kelowna and the Kelowna RCMP would not achieve the results that were desired. On June 22, 2000 Steve Foster and Arlene Blanchette met with the Bylaw Supervisor and discussed the summit in Vancouver and given a copy of the information obtained.

On March 6, 2001 the Kelowna Detachment of the RCMP held an information session with all the local alarm companies, monitoring companies and security patrols. The purpose of the meeting was to provide them with information to seek changes to the existing Alarm Bylaw and to solicit their support in working with the RCMP to bring about the changes. A presentation was made by representatives from the City of Kelowna, Vancouver Police Department and the alarm industry itself discussing the merits of a False Alarm Reduction Program.

Since March 6, 2001 the RCMP and the City of Kelowna have continued meeting and reviewing/developing a new draft bylaw taking into consideration all the concerns and requirements brought forward over the past months in order to achieve the desired reduction of false alarms and enhancing officer/public safety. To accomplish this task we have held ongoing consultation with the local alarm, monitoring and security companies and their input has been incorporated into the draft bylaw.

A copy of the new proposed bylaw is attached along with a breakdown of the fees, start-up costs and recovery costs.

Respectfully submitted,

A Dixon

Attach.

START-UP COSTS:

1. Purchase of Equipment / Software	7,000.00	
2. Personnel: Data Entry / Co-ordinator (Wages/Benefits)		
- City Employee (Under Dave Cassel)		
- Clerk @ Pay grade 5	1 st Year	44,199.00
	(2 nd Year – (45,083.00)	
3. Total Estimated Start-Up Costs		<u>\$51,199.00</u>

RECOVERY COSTS:

1. Registration fees for Alarm Users (6,200 Alarms @ \$10.00 ea)	62,000.00	
2. Residential / Business Alarm (1,000 x 3 Alarms @ avg \$100.00 as of 2003)	100,000.00	<u>\$162,000.00</u>

Note: Total False Alarms for 2003 were: 7,040

Statistical Alarm Reduction re:
Bylaw Enactment may be up to 50% 3,520

Calculations based on 2003 outstanding alarms and does not include escalating fees or false hold-up alarms

Statistically speaking an Alarm Reduction Bylaw and support system can reduce the number of false alarms up to 40 – 60%. Subsequently if we could reduce false alarms by 2,100 per year or approximately 30%, this would result in savings of manpower, time and costs to the RCMP by at least \$55,650.00.

Eg. - 1 Officer per alarm based on .5 hrs @ \$53.00 per hr (\$26.50)
- 2,100 alarm reductions @ \$26.50 per alarm \$55,650.00
(Based on 1 officer response only – 1,050 man hrs/yr)

SERVICE FEE PROCESS: (Graduated per Calendar Year)

- a) **Security Alarms:** (All users)
- 2 free alarms per year
 - Residential - 3rd alarm @ 50.00
 - Commercial - 3rd alarm @ 100.00
 - Industrial - 3rd alarm @ 100.00
 - Residential - 4th alarm (plus) @ 100.00
 - Commercial - 4th alarm (plus) @ 200.00
 - Industrial - 4th alarm (plus) @ 200.00
- b) **Hold-Up Alarms:**
- 1 free alarm per year
 - 2nd alarm @ 100.00
 - 3rd alarm @ 200.00
 - 4th alarm @ 300.00
- c) **Exemption of Service Fees:**
- Caused by storm, lightning, fire, earthquake or other acts of God
 - Caused by communication network disruptions beyond control of alarm owner, employee or designate
- d) **Appeals:** (In Writing – Assessment of Administration Fees / Suspensions, etc)
- \$25.00 appeal fee (returned if appeal upheld)
 - First level of appeal conducted by Co-ordinator
 - Second level of appeal conducted by Advisory Board (Decision Final)
- e) **Advisory Board Members:**
- Alarm Co-ordinator
 - RCMP
 - Bylaw Supervisor
 - Alarm Company Representative
 - Public/Business Representative
- f) **Education Process:** (Implementation)
- Data Input by alarm company to RCMP
 - Alarm company to review alarm use with customer
 - Alarm company to provide training to user
 - Media coverage of alarm bylaw
 - Alarm companies to assist in mail-out of information to customers
- g) **Suspension of Response:** (Co-ordinator suspends if:)
- User has 4 or more false alarms in a 365 day period
 - False statement of fact in application / registration
 - Outstanding fees assessed under bylaw
 - Failure of user to supply written certification from alarm company of inspection
 - On re-registration if user has 2 false alarms over a 60 day period
 - If NCO / Watch Commander feels there is user abuse of system

h) Re-Instatement:

- User submits up-to-date application and registration fee
- All outstanding fees are paid
- Submit certification from alarm company of inspection and repair confirming that the alarm is in good working order
- Pay \$50.00 administration fee

i) Collection System: (Fees / Registration)

- Handled through Co-ordinator position
- Unpaid fees placed on taxes / utility at end of year