

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR AND MEMBER, PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE relative to the implementation of the Los Angeles Fire Department's (LAFD) Unwanted Fire Alarm plan.

Recommendation for Council action:

REQUEST the City Attorney to prepare and present an ordinance amending Los Angeles Municipal Code Sections 57.122, establishing and charging a fee for unwanted alarms; 57.202, defining an unwanted alarm; and, 57.113.6.3.2, establishing the method of calculating the fee.

Fiscal Impact Statement: None submitted by the LAFD. Neither the City Administrative Officer nor the Chief Legislative Analyst has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted.

SUMMARY

In a report to the Board of Fire Commissioners dated May 18, 2015, LAFD recommends various actions relative to implementing an Unwanted Fire Alarm plan to register fire alarm systems, improve performance of problematic systems, and recover the cost of emergency responses to repetitive unwanted alarm locations. LAFD reports that there is a growing number of alarm systems used throughout the City of Los Angeles. All alarm users and alarm owners must be made aware of how to correctly operate their alarm system. Emergency response to unwanted alarms is a burden for City of Los Angeles taxpayers, and raises other operational and safety concerns.

LAFD further reports that limited resources and the increasing number of automatic alarm calls have hampered efforts to educate user/alarm owners and alarm companies to address unwanted alarms. Developing an Unwanted Alarm Management Plan that includes an online education component as well as developing educational materials for LAFD first responders and associated penalties will serve as an inducement for alarm owners to fix their alarms. The initial enforcement will be on commercial properties and multi-family residences only. After one year of gathering data, enforcement can be expanded to single-family residences.

LAFD goes on to define various types and causes of unwanted alarms. The Department estimates program implementation in February or March, 2016. The program includes the formation of a stakeholders task force, the selection of a third-party contractor for the collection of unwanted alarm fees, and other milestones and estimates for resource needs. On June 2, 2015, the Board of Fire Commissioners approved LAFD's recommendations, forwarding to Council the request for an ordinance to implement the unwanted alarm fee.

At the Public Safety Committee meeting held June 12, 2015, the Committee Chair and Member discussed this matter with LAFD staff. The Department representative stated that LAFD received 422,000 calls for emergency service. Of these calls, 29,000 were made by automated alarm systems, of which fifty percent were false alarms. The Department has already begun working with alarm companies and subscribers to reduce unwanted calls for service.

The Committee Chair instructed LAFD to report back to the Public Safety Committee every six months relative to the implementation of the Unwanted Alarm System, and to develop a metric

to measure the reduction in false alarm calls made for those locations that are cited. The Committee Member instructed LAFD to calculate the actual cost for responding to a false alarm. Committee Members recommend that Council request the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance to effect the requested Unwanted Alarm fee, as recommended by the Board of Fire Commissioners.

Respectfully Submitted,

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. A. ...', written over the text 'PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE'.

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
ENGLANDER:	YES
BUSCAINO:	ABSENT
BONIN:	ABSENT
O'FARRELL:	YES
MARTINEZ:	ABSENT

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-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-