



Transmitter

A Publication of the Texas Burglar & Fire Alarm Association



TBFAA & NTAA Host FARA False Alarm Reduction Class

On March 30 and 31, 2005, TBFAA & NTAA cosponsored an interactive two-day training course for public safety and alarm industry professionals entitled "How to Implement Your Successful Solution to False Alarms." **Continued Page 10**



TBFAA Active In Texas Legislative Session

TBFAA Leaders have made weekly visits to Austin during a busy legislative session. Bills have been introduced to change how local ordinances are enacted and enforced, to change licensing requirements for burglar alarms, fire alarms, locksmiths and medical and personal alarms, change contract requirements and require visual smoke alarms and CO detectors. **Continued Page 7**



TBFAA & NTAA Win FARA Award

At the recent Annual International Training Symposium and Conference in Miami, FL, the FARA Achievement Award was presented to the North Texas Alarm Association (NTAA) and the Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (TBFAA) for their unwavering support and sponsorship of FARA's new regional training program. **Continued Page 5**

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Visit Page 12 For Info on TBFAA Convention Galveston - October 2005



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President's Message

Government is not reason, it is not eloquence, it is force; like fire, a troublesome servant and a fearful master. Never for a moment should it be left to irresponsible action."
-George Washington

It has been a busy few months for TBFAA. We have forged new relationships with public safety and received recognition for our efforts (See *related stories page 1*). We are well under way for our annual convention in October (See *related story page 1*) and we continue to benefit from a close relationship with local associations in Texas (See *related story page 4*). We have supported NESA's effort on VoIP and sought our own clarifications with local, state and national officials on the issue. (see *related story on page 6*)

All of this has kept us busy, but our work with the Texas legislature has been the most challenging. In his report on page 7, Malcolm Reed our legislative chair provides you with an extensive update of what happened this year that affects you. If you have not met your representative or senator, or attended a committee meeting, you may not be aware of how complex the process is. Each year thousands of bills and amendments are proposed, a few pass as proposed, many are defeated, but most that pass do so with amendments. As it gets later in the session it becomes harder and harder to keep track of all the changes. As the final deadline nears, copies of the final language is often not available. Many of the bills that affect us await the Governors signature. We will let you know the final outcomes.

Our Lobbyist, Ron Kessler and dedicated members of our legislative committee led by Malcolm and assisted by Rodney Hooker, Dennis Bryant, Rex Adams, Nathan Bryant, Roger Byrd, Walter Tutor, Dave Simon, JD Benfer and Henry Homrighaus, work hard each session to make sense of what is proposed and make the views of our industry known. It is a thankless job that requires countless hours and lots of flexibility to be in Austin on hours notice throughout the session.

We all owe our thanks to these dedicated folks, because without them our businesses would surely be a lot harder to run. One of the benefits of being involved with the TBFAA is that I get to see people give time and effort to help others. Regardless of how involved we are we all get the benefit of each others effort. The old chinese proverb: "One generation plants the trees; another gets the shade." really is true.

Over the next few months, TBFAA will be working with localities to make sure ordinances are fair and effective. We will continue to work with the state fire marshal and the Private Security Board on the implementation of the new laws and regulations. We will keep you informed about the new security standards from NFPA (See *related story page 21*),

If you read this as a member, thank you for your support, If you read it as a non member, we need your involvement.

Each day we face challenges on your behalf and all too soon the legislature will reconvene. TBFAA needs you, we need the strength that comes in numbers, because as they say - *A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.*

Chip Bird
TBFAA President



TBFAA President Chip Bird

TBFAA needs you, we need the strength that comes in numbers, because as they say - *A chain is only as strong as its weakest link.*

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The Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, Inc. (TBFAA) is a nonprofit organization of security professionals who have joined together to enrich the industry by providing membership training and representing the membership as a whole in the Texas Legislature, the Texas Commission on Private Security, and the Commission on Fire Protection, among many other programs.

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Brad Shipp, Editor

Submitted articles contained in this newsletter are the expressed opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Officers, Directors, and Members of the TBFAA. The publisher of this magazine is not responsible for any errors or omissions in advertising or other advertising matters.

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HGCAA & NTAA Contribute

Walter Tutor made a motion at the May Houston Gulf Coast Alarm Assn, (HGCAA) meeting to donate \$5,000 to the TBFAA legislative fund. The motion was seconded and the members voted unanimously in favor of the motion. At the North Texas Alarm Assn. (NTAA) May Board meeting, a motion to donate \$5,000 to the TBFAA general fund was passed unanimously.

"These are an extremely generous donations and I am very grateful and appreciative to HGCAA and NTAA for this." Chip Bird, TBFAA President.

2005 Training Schedule

Schedule & Registration Forms Available 'On Line'

Visit <http://www.tbfaa.org> for course descriptions, registration forms and class schedules.

Level 1 Class Schedule

| | | | |
|-----------|----------------|-----------|-------------|
| Jan 27-28 | Houston | Jul 28-29 | Houston |
| Feb 24-25 | Dallas | Aug 25-26 | Austin |
| Mar 16-17 | San Antonio | Sep 29-30 | Dallas |
| Apr 28-29 | El Paso | Oct 6-7 | Galveston |
| May 26-27 | Corpus Christi | Nov 10-11 | El Paso |
| Jun 23-24 | Dallas | Dec 08-09 | San Antonio |

Fire Prep Class Schedule

| | | | |
|--------|-------------|--------|-------------|
| Jan 14 | Dallas | Jul 18 | San Antonio |
| Feb 28 | San Antonio | Aug 19 | Dallas |
| Mar 18 | Houston | Sep 12 | San Antonio |
| Apr 22 | Dallas | Oct 25 | Houston |
| May 09 | San Antonio | Nov 18 | Dallas |
| Jun 17 | Houston | Dec 16 | Houston |

TBFAA & NTAA Win FARA Award

At the recent Annual International Training Symposium and Conference in Miami, FL, the FARA Achievement Award was presented to the North Texas Alarm Association (NTAA) and the Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (TBFAA) for their unwavering support and sponsorship of FARA's new regional training program.

The NTAA became aware of FARA's training program and made a request that we select Dallas as the site of FARA's first training course, since they felt there was a great need to help promote effective false alarm reduction programs, as well as foster an environment of cooperation and good working relationships between public safety and the alarm industry in Texas. The NTAA Board of Directors voted to sponsor one-half of the entire training costs for public safety personnel.



FARA President Norma Beaubien presented TBFAA & NTAA Member Kathleen Schraufnagel with the award

which never would have happened without the wonderfully generous support of the two alarm associations.

In her nomination, Norma Beaubien, President of FARA stated, "Both NTAA and TBFAA went way 'above and beyond' in their efforts to help foster the cooperative environment that FARA's mission statement embodies, and for that reason, believe that they are both incredibly worthy of this award."

What is FARA?

It is the mission of the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA) to provide a forum for local government alarm ordinance managers to exchange information on successful false alarm reduction programs, to serve as a clearinghouse for agencies seeking to reduce false alarms, and to foster an environment of cooperation among law enforcement, the alarm industry and the alarm users.

For more information visit www.faraonline.org

"Both NTAA and TBFAA went way 'above and beyond' in their efforts to help foster the cooperative environment that FARA's mission statement embodies, and for that reason, believe that they are both incredibly worthy of this award."

Norma Beaubien, FARA President

The TBFAA Board of Directors agreed with NTAA in the usefulness of the course and the promotion of developing better working relationships between public safety and the alarm industry and voted to sponsor the remaining one-half of the entire training costs. The net result was that FARA was able to partner with the NTAA and the TBFAA in presenting our course to any public safety personnel, as well as to any member of the NTAA or TBFAA. The outcome was phenomenal, with great representation and participation by public safety and the alarm industry,

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NESA Lobbys Congress on VoIP

In March, the National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA) met with Congress regarding Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and how it negatively affects the electronic security industry.

VoIP technology allows consumers to make phone calls through the Internet using broadband or DSL. The fairly new technology, it began to really take off in 2003, now has over 500,000 subscribers according to Frost & Sullivan. One of the biggest reasons consumers are flocking to VoIP is the low cost. VoIP providers charge anywhere from \$15 to \$30 for unlimited calls anywhere in the U.S. or Canada. Since the technology uses the Internet to connect calls it is substantially cheaper than landlines. Also consumers can choose their area code; so an actor in Utah could choose an New York City area code to attract talent scouts.

But, there are problems with VoIP that consumers and our industry need to be aware of. Many times VoIP calls do not connect to 911. When NESA met with Congress, the group distributed a position paper on VoIP. In this paper, NESA quotes a *Houston Chronicle* article from February 2005, which states that a family was unable to use 911 to contact police during a home invasion in which a couple was shot. The couple's daughter dialed 911 and was given a message that she could not dial 911 from her phone. Finally, the girl went to a neighbor's house to call 911.

A lawsuit has stemmed from the incident. According to an article in the *Dallas Morning News* in March, the state of Texas is now suing Vonage Holdings Corp., the VoIP provider, the family had contracted with for VoIP service in their home. The suit appears to claim that the VoIP provider did not sufficiently warn the customer that they would not be able to make 911 calls. In addition to the 911 issue, "VoIP does not currently enable signals to be reliably sent to services which monitor burglar and fire alarms," according to NESA Government Relations Committee Chair Emil Wengel.

Unless consumers retain a separate phone service, they will not be protected during emergencies. The worst part is that they will not know they are not protected until an emergency occurs and their alarm does not contact the central station. This is why it is extremely important for consumers to inform alarm companies if they switch to VoIP. Alarm companies also need to extend communications to consumers. Publishing information on VoIP in a company newsletter is a good idea or sending out information with monthly bills. Alarm users need to know their monitoring calls may not go

through a VoIP connection. Many dealers may not want to install to a VoIP line. It is possible but is very unreliable.

According to the *SDM* article, *Alarm-to-VoIP Connection: It's Possible, but not Recommended*, "alarm installation companies should be extremely cautious and thorough when connecting an existing alarm communicator to a VoIP telephone adapter. Dealers providing such connections should have clients sign addendums to their contract with the alarm company, clearly stating that the connection of the alarm communicator to the VoIP service was requested by the client, that VoIP communications are not recommended for alarm communications, that VoIP communications may be unreliable and that the alarm company specifically disclaims any responsibility if alarm communications fail."

The article explains a better alternative is to sell the client a different or backup communicator, such as long-range radio, cellular, or IP alarm transmitter. But these options can cause additional costs for the customer that they may not accept.

There is one other big problem with VoIP - it is not as reliable as traditional landlines. One of the largest VoIP providers, Vonage, in March 2005 suffered an outage of its service to about half of its 500,000 subscribers. The outage left Vonage customers without phone service for about 45 minutes. The outage, according to an article by the Associated Press, was due to software problems. A software patch stabilized the network.

NESA Government Relations Chair Emil Wengel, said, "With all of these issues, NESA and our industry need to educate end users about the hazards of VoIP, from not being able to call 911, to the alarm system not being able to contact a monitoring station in an emergency situation. This is a public safety issue and it is our industry's responsibility to help consumers understand what they are getting when they sign-up for VoIP service. A slightly reduced bill, but more importantly the potential for a unsafe situation. We need to do all we can to help consumers." In NESA's meetings with Congress, the group stated that as technology advances, Congress should require providers to seek technological solutions that will enable both public and private emergency services to be reached. VoIP should be made backward-compatible with the 30 million alarms now in service.

For more information on VoIP or to find out how you can lobby Congress on this issue contact TBFAA at 877-908-2322.

TBFAA Active In Texas Legislative Session

TBFAA Legislative Report On The 79th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature

By Malcolm Reed, TBFAA Legislative Chair

The recently adjourned 79th session of the Texas Legislature is a prime example of why the alarm industry needs a strong association, like TBFAA, and why TBFAA needs a strong full time lobbyist backed up by an active legislative committee.

"Pandora's Box"

The "Pandora's Box" syndrome may have occurred this year in Austin. The TBFAA Legislative team spent numerous hours at the Texas State Capitol meeting with Legislators and their staff, primarily working on three issues. Municipal regulation of alarm systems and users was the focal point for TBFAA, while also working on a fire alarm bill and several bills relating to the automatic renewal clause commonly used by alarm companies in agreements with customers.

Automatic renewal clauses - HB-533

Early in the 79th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature several bills were filed that related to the automatic renewal of contracts, with one bill specifically targeting alarm companies. As the session continued, all of these bills migrated to what became House Bill 533.

The bill posed several challenges for the TBFAA Team and would have created some major hardship for alarm companies and other industries, which utilize automatic renewing contracts. One section of HB-533 would have made it a violation of the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act if a customer were not notified of the automatic renewal within a specific time frame and in a certain manner.

After testimony by TBFAA and countless conversations, HB-533 passed the House, but did not pass out of the Senate Business & Commerce Committee.

However, the lesson for alarm companies here is that we should all review the final version of HB-533 and consider how we can better inform our customers of the automatic renewal clauses in the contractual agreements they sign. Actual and/or perceived abuses of automatic renewing contracts are what spurred these bills originally.

HB-3385- Fire Alarm Bill

The TBFAA fire alarm bill, HB-3385 by Representative Joe Pickett, met with unknown opposition and died in the House Calendars

Committee.

This bill would have created a residential specific technician license and would have updated obsolete and outdated code references. Additionally, the bill would have allowed a municipality to require a call to the premises of a residence before notifying the fire department of the receipt of a fire alarm signal, which was intended to help combat false fire alarm dispatches.

The TBFAA Team supported the bill and originally had the impression this bill was relatively mundane and would meet with no opposition, however this obviously was not the case. We will continue to work with Representative Pickett to create a residential specific technician license next year.

HB-2304 + Unfavorable Changes = SB568

The alarm bill originally known as HB-2304 received the most attention by the TBFAA Team. In fact, the bill received so much attention it was delayed to the point that it died in the Senate.

This bill made substantial changes to the Texas Local Government Code, Section 214, which places guidelines on municipal regulation of alarm system users. New requirements were placed on alarm companies and increased fees and fines were placed on alarm users. The final draft of HB-2304 would have been good public policy for municipalities, the alarm industry and alarm users.

"All Texas alarm companies are encouraged to review and prepare for the new requirements of SB-568."

Continued on Page 9



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Above and Beyond

Legislative Support

The primary objective of the Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association is to represent the alarm industry before the Texas Legislature and other governmental agencies. The objectives of the association can only be accomplished by the combined efforts of the Board of Directors and our lobbyist Ron Kessler of the law firm of Ron Kessler Group, LLC. The Board of Directors, headed up by President Chip Bird, coordinates the activities of the association. Ron Kessler heads up our lobbying effort. It would be fair to say "he opens a lot of doors".

The Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association incurs a cost of more than \$90,000 per Biannual Legislative Session for our legislative effort. The membership dues are not enough to cover this expense. Special help is needed.

We, the Board of Directors, are asking the professional alarm dealers of the state of Texas to participate either monthly or yearly in this ongoing legislative effort. With the team concept we can get the job done.

Please visit our website <http://www.tbfaa.org> or call us at 877-908-2322 to sign up to become a Team Member.

TBFAA Political Action Committee

The TBFAA PAC supports the mission of TBFAA by making contributions to elect candidates for public office.

Contributions or gifts to the TBFAA PAC are not tax deductible.

Help us promote public safety and security in Texas by contributing today.

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Texas City Police Seek Changes to Permit Regulations

Excerpted from an Article in The Galveston County Daily News, By Daniel Huron, Published June 4, 2005

TEXAS CITY — Texas City police officials presented proposed changes to several city ordinances during Wednesday's city commission meeting that are meant to clarify the regulations. On Wednesday, commissioners approved changes to the alarm systems ordinance. Permits for residential burglar, fire or robbery alarm systems now cost \$5. Business permits cost \$15. The city will also no longer automatically charge for the renewal of an alarm permit. Permit-holders will be responsible for renewing their permit at the police station on or before Sept. 30 of each year. The changes would also affect the amount of money the city charges a permit-holder for a response to a false alarm. Residential alarm permit-holders will be charged \$15 if police respond to more than 10 false alarms. Business permit-holders will be charged \$50 if police respond to more than seven false alarms.

The itinerant vendor, taxicab and peddler ordinances are scheduled to be presented to the city commission during its June 15 and July 6 meetings. Commissioners are scheduled to vote on the proposed changes during the July 6 meeting.

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TBFAA Active In Texas Legislative Session

Continued from Page 7

Unfortunately a less desirable version of HB-2304 was attached to Senate Bill 568 in the final days of the session and unless vetoed by the governor, will become law.

We are still waiting for a final version of this bill, but we believe effective September 1, 2005, it will allow localities

- * to require two call verification
- * require the alarm company to give a list of specific information to each user
- * require notice to the user within 7 days of the sale of a contract or of any outsourced services to another company
- * to regulate "personal emergency response system providers"
- * to charge up to \$50 for 3 to 5, \$75 for 6 or 7 and \$100 for 8 or more false alarms in a 12 month period.

And that effective January 1, 2007, ANSI/SIA CP-01 compliance will be required for all alarm panels installed in Texas.

It is truly unfortunate SB-568 did not mirror the language in HB-2304 as this would have made for good public policy. We will let you know if the Governor signs SB-568. The jury is obviously still out on SB-568 as it relates to alarm systems and users. Let it also be known that we as the TBFAA and every regional Texas alarm association have an obligation to continue to work for better police relations for our customers and better public policy.

Our customers pay our bills and they pay the police department's bills as well. Our customers deserve the protection that the TBFAA was unsuccessful in achieving this session. For now we must work towards more successful false alarm reduction and better municipal tracking of the statistics, and we must become very diligent in watching for abuses and exploitation of alarm users.

Fees Increased?

Rep. Joe Driver introduced HB 2303 that will increase the fees for most Private Security Board licenses by \$100 and by \$5 for most individual registrations. TBFAA did not support the bill, but supported a rider or amendment that would state the additional funds will be used for the intended purpose - to hire additional employees to properly enforce 1702.

An amendment to require the additional fees to come back to DPS and to add 39 employees was added. The amended bill has passed both the House and Senate and awaits the governor's sig-

nature.

Thanks to Supporters

As a final note, the TBFAA and all Texas alarm companies again owe a thank-you to Senator Kenneth Armbrister and his chief of staff Nick James and Senator Jeff Wentworth. Even though they were unsuccessful in getting HB-2304 approved by the Senate, the language that came out of the Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee was nothing short of brilliant. Additionally, special thanks to Representative Joseph Pickett and his chief of staff Monica Pinion for their assistance with the fire alarm bill. These Members and their staff not only extended true Texas hospitality to the TBFAA Team, but again this session stepped to the plate for Texas Alarm Users. No out-of-the-park home run was hit, however without their support and assistance, Texas Alarm Users could have been much worse off.

Kessler Represents Our Association

For the fifth consecutive regular session, the TBFAA was privileged to have had Ron Kessler represent our association before the Texas Legislature. Ron has become intently familiar with the plight of Texas Alarm Users and has eloquently represented their interest through the Texas Burglar & Fire Alarm Association and its Legislative Committee. I for one appreciate every ounce of effort he put into this session.

We knew we were in for a hill climb like we had never climbed before, and I think I can speak for everyone who spent a day at the Capitol this year when I say, "we're tired of climbing". We may not have reached the summit this year, but we sure got a great close-up look at it.

Thanks to everyone on the TBFAA Legislative Committee for the tons of hours and effort. We did not get what we went to Austin for this year, but I honestly believe that we are among a small handful of people nationally who even took the time to try. Thanks again to everyone.

All Texas alarm companies are encouraged to review and prepare for the new requirements of SB-568.

You may read this text by visiting the web link www.capitol.state.tx.us/tlo/legislation/bill_status.htm.

It is not law yet, but will most likely become law on September 1st of this year.

TBFAA & NTAA Sponsor FARA Class

Continued from page 1-

The course, which was created by the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA), is designed to help open the lines of communication between public safety and the alarm industry, and to show how, by working together, they can enact local ordinances, which meet the needs of a specific community. Some topics covered in the course include common alarm management terms, defining the scope of the false alarm problem, causes and solutions, available resources, communication, and design, adoption, and implementation of



L to R- Chip Bird-TBFAA, Dennis Dolinar-ADI, Chris Russell-NTAA, Norma Beaubien-FARA & Jim Cogswell-FARA

a false alarm reduction program.

The inaugural presentation of the course occurred at the ADI – Dallas facility in Farmers

Branch, Texas. Through the generous support of the TBFAA and the NTAA, FARA was able to present this course FREE of charge to any public safety agency employee, as well as to members of the TBFAA, NTAA and FARA.

FARA President Norma Beaubien said, "I am truly humbled by the incredible support of the TBFAA and NTAA, which will allow us to offer this course



to many more people than would otherwise be able to attend."

TBFAA President Chip Bird said, "As representatives of the alarm industry in Texas we are

committed to doing whatever we can to reduce false alarms. We are happy to do our part to help localities manage this problem. And I look forward to learning more about the challenges that public safety professionals face."

NTAA President Chris Russell, said, "We are proud to support any venue that brings industry and public safety together to tackle the false alarm issue. My hope is that the knowledge and awareness we all gain at the training session will lead

to more productive exchanges in the future between public safety and industry."

Seventeen students from fifteen law enforcement agencies joined ten students from eight alarm companies.



Students received a course notebook, that contains over ten different guides dealing with different aspects of alarm management, 14 false alarm reduction bulletins that can be used for education purposes as bill stuffers or separate mailings, five model alarm ordinances and more. The course also included many interactive exercises, for students to take what they have learned and apply it to real-life situations.

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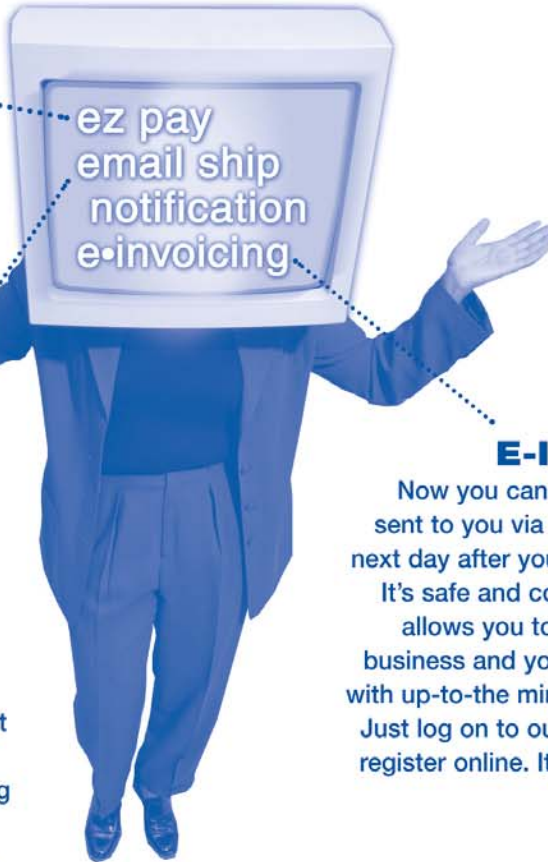
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What: TBFAA Annual Convention and Trade Show

When: Thursday October 27
Friday, October 28
Saturday October 29

Where: The Tremont House - A Wyndham Historic Hotel
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Tentative Schedule

Thursday October 27

6:30-8:30 pm Presidents Reception

Friday October 28


9 -Noon Sales & Marketing Class By Henry Homrighaus
9 -Noon New Markets with Video Surveillance and Monitoring By Jim Burkey, UCC
Noon – 1pm Lunch for Class & Exhibitors
1-2 pm TBFAA Update
2-3 pm Fire License Update
3-4 pm TBPS Update
4 -8pm Exhibits Open
8- 11pm Casino Night

Saturday October 29

9:30-10:30am Ethics Class
10:45-11:45am Compliance Class
9am to Noon- Central Station Communications By Jim Burkey, UCC
11:45am-Noon Board Meeting
Noon-2pm Annual Meeting & Lunch
2-4pm Technical Class- To Be Determined
2:15-5:15pm Board Meeting



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UL to Study Smoke Characteristics

UL Study to Evaluate Fundamental Smoke Characteristics May Lead to Improved Smoke Alarm Effectiveness

Underwriters Laboratories Inc. is undertaking a new study to determine whether recent changes in household furnishings have changed the way fires behave in homes and, consequently, alter the way smoke alarms respond. The not-for-profit product safety certification organization reported its intentions after evaluating recent research presented at the UL Fire Engineering Advisory Council earlier this month. While smoke alarms continue to play an important role in reducing deaths and injuries from fires -- an almost 50-percent drop in fire deaths have been attributed to smoke alarms since the mid-1970s -- UL believes that the recent findings may offer an opportunity to make smoke alarms even more effective.

A study released last year by the National Institute of Standards and Technology suggests that fires in homes today smolder longer before igniting and then burn hotter and faster than what was typical when smoke alarms were first introduced. The study concluded that because today's fires can be more aggressive, the time needed to escape some types of fires has been reduced from 17 minutes to just three. "The inference is that fires behave differently today than they did in the past because homes now contain larger quantities and different types of materials," said Tom Chapin, general manager of UL's Fire Safety Division. "Our objective is to gain a better understanding of how these newer materials burn in a residential setting and the types of smoke they generate. From the data we gather, UL will develop fundamental information that could lead to new standards for smoke alarms that would help reduce the risk of injury or loss of life due to fires."

Different Kind of False Alarm

Blow-up doll sets off bomb alarm in post office

Reuters News Service March 17, 2005- BERLIN - A blow-up sex doll sparked a bomb alert in a German post office after it started to vibrate inside a package awaiting delivery, police said Wednesday. "Workers were unsettled when it began vibrating and made strange noises," a spokesman for police in the eastern city of Chemnitz said. "They were worried the package might be a bomb."

Officers brought the sender to the scene and discovered the source of alarm was an electrical device inside a life-size female sex doll. The man told police he had wanted to return the doll because it kept turning itself on at the wrong moment. Order was restored after the sender removed the doll's batteries so the defective product could be returned.

Currently, some 95 percent of U.S. homes have at least one smoke alarm, employing either photo-electric sensors, which are generally more effective for detecting smoldering fires, or ionization sensors, which are more sensitive to open flames. Several manufacturers now make alarms that combine both technologies. Chapin stated that regardless of the technology used, a properly installed smoke alarm system remains the most effective way to protect families from the risk of fire in the home. "Since 1975, when smoke alarms first became widely available in the United States, deaths attributed to residential fires have dropped by about half," he said.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 402,000 residential fires were reported in 2003, killing 3,165 people and injuring 14,075. That year fire destroyed just over \$6 billion in residential property. "The most important thing to remember about smoke alarms," Chapin adds, "is to use them and check their batteries regularly. By far, the most common reason smoke alarms fail is because they have been disabled or the battery is missing or dead."

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False Alarms Cost EL Paso \$1 million

El Paso Times- Wednesday, June 8, 2005 By Tammy Fonce-Olivas

Police Chief Richard Wiles is asking the city to impose stiffer penalties on subscribers to security alarm systems that have officers responding to businesses and residences for calls not related to crimes. "We handle approximately 2,000 alarms calls a month, and of that over 99 percent are false," Wiles said Tuesday, referring to calls about intrusions at businesses or residences. Police estimated the department spent more than \$1 million worth of staff hours responding to false alarm calls last year. A total of 31,590 alarm calls were reported to police last year, and 299 of them were valid alarm calls, according to police. Wiles said these calls not only are costly to taxpayers but also pose a threat to public safety by unnecessarily taking up police time and having officers rush through traffic to respond to them. He said false-alarm calls also threaten the safety of officers who may "let their guard down" because they consistently respond to properties known for having alarms tripped by accident, by bad equipment or by the weather.

Susan Gomez, manager of Your Image Boutique, said that although the store had three false alarms in recent years, she supported plans by police to cut down on false-alarm calls. "Definitely, anything to help the police. They could be catching a criminal instead of checking on a building," she said. Gomez said she thought fewer false alarm calls would be reported to police if alarm companies and their customers worked together better to determine whether there was a real emergency before involving the police.

Wiles said his proposal to be presented to the City Council this summer would ask the city to allow police to stop responding to alarm calls if a business or residence did not have a city permit for operating an alarm system or if it had an excessive number of false alarms. Police now must respond to all alarm calls, he said. His proposal would also seek to require a permit for operating an alarm system to be renewed annually and would require an alarm system company to delay involving police until it has tried to verify with the subscriber that the alarm was triggered by an intrusion. The city permits cost \$15 and don't have to be renewed.

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In each issue you see companies who support our association and industry through advertising. Most of these companies also support our industry events, our legislative efforts, our meetings, the newsletter, and much more. It is important that you support the companies who support our association.

Financial Security Services Celebrates 15th Anniversary- Dallas, TX – June 2005. Financial Security Services Inc, founded in 1990, is celebrating its 15th anniversary in the security industry this year. FSS has specialized in providing financing and billing services to independent alarm dealers since inception. Monitoring services, which are UL, FM and IQ certified, were added in 1998 through a subsidiary, Securion Central Control. For more information contact Daniel T. Linscott, 800-864-3131 dtlinscott@fssinc.net.

DSC, part of Tyco Fire and Security and a leading provider of intrusion security products worldwide, introduced the T-Link TL250 Internet alarm communicator at ISC west. It creates a fully supervised, high-security communication path between protected premises and central monitoring stations. The simple-to-install modules save money by taking advantage of existing networks to provide secure Internet communications over a private network (LAN/WAN) or the Internet, between the control panel and the Sur-Gard™ System III central station receiver. The Internet alarm communicator is also available as part of the new Internet communicator kit (model PC5020NKTL), which includes the DSC alarm panel (model PC5020NK) housed in a single cabinet. For more information visit www.dsc.com

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Continued on page 17

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Continued on Page 19

Dallas Update

Strengthening Enforcement of a City Ordinance

A call for notification, as the Dallas Police Department prepares to enforce a longstanding city ordinance

Geoff Kohl, editor, SecurityInfoWatch.com

Chris Russell, president of the North Texas Alarm Association, recently sent us a note to help keep security dealers abreast of policy in Dallas.

In Dallas, Texas, the city alarm ordinance, in section 15c-7.1(b), states that: An alarm company that has a contract with a permit holder or person in control of an alarm system shall send a certification to the chief within 10 days of performing or causing the performance of an alarm system installation or conversion.

According to Sgt. Gene Hale of the Dallas Police Department, that requirement has been part of the ordinance since 1995, an ordinance which was created in partnership with local alarm industry representatives. Despite the fact that the ordinance has always required that 'notification of installation,' Hale says that the city had previously been unable to thoroughly enforce the requirement to staffing requirements.

With recent staffing changes, however, Sgt. Hale says that the Dallas Police Department will now be enforcing that part of the ordinance and has asked that all installing alarm companies submit notice of their installations or conversion. In a conversation with SecurityInfoWatch.com, Sgt. Hale stressed that security dealers should recognize that this only applies to the city of Dallas, and not to all of Dallas County or even nearby cities like Carrollton, Texas. As part of the conversation, Sgt. Hale also stressed that dealers need to do business with monitoring companies that are license in the state. A list of those licensed companies is available online at the Texas Department of Safety Private Security Bureau (formerly the Commission on Private Security): [p://www.txdps.state.tx.us/psb/](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/psb/)

As part of the renewed effort at enforcement, dealers are asked to submit the following installation information to the Dallas Police Department via fax. Please also note that a form is available from the alarm office (call 214-671-4120). Please assist your fellow security dealers by distributing this information to associates and other local companies who may need to be advised of this strengthened enforcement.

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Internet Tidbit - Original Source Unknown

A burglar broke into a house one night. He shined his flashlight around, looking for valuables, and when he picked up a CD player to place in his sack, a strange, disembodied voice echoed from the dark, saying,

"Jesus is watching you." He nearly jumped out of his skin, clicked his flashlight off, and froze. When he heard nothing more after a bit, he shook his head, promised himself a vacation after the next big score, then clicked the light on and began searching for more valuables.

Just as he pulled the stereo out so he could disconnect the wires, clear as a bell he heard, "Jesus is watching you."

Freaked out, he shined his light around frantically, looking for the source of the voice. Finally, in the corner of the room, his flashlight beam came to rest on a parrot.

"Did you say that?" he hissed at the parrot. "Yep," the parrot confessed, then squawked, "I'm just trying to warn you."

The burglar relaxed. "Warn me, huh? Who in the world are you?" "Moses," replied the bird. "Moses?" the burglar laughed. "What kind of people would name a bird Moses?" "The kind of people that would name a rottweiler Jesus."

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South Texas Alarm Association Update

Boy, is this year rolling along. It seems just day before yesterday it was New Years Eve, and then Valentines Day. Now we are coming up on July 4th.

April 19, the annual South Texas Golf Tournament was held at Northern Hills Golf Club. This was the second or third year we have been there, and as usual it was a wonderful day. The Semi-Pro Team of Shiner, Rodriquez, Phiney, and Marcus took this year first place. They had a round of 62 to beat out second place Ranger American's team of Schumacher, Barry, Hughes, and Naegele. Rounding out in third place was the Honeywell Team of Marshal, Barbosa, Reyna, and Mohler. Just as in the professional tournaments, four points separated our first place team from the third place team.

This year, again, we want to give our sincere thanks and appreciation to Gibby Rodriquez from A.D.I. and Roger Byrd from Security One, Inc. These two, along with Sandra Barton in Roger's office and Jackie Baldwin at A.D.I. San Antonio, have always made sure that South Texas Alarm Assoc. has a well-attended and well-planned golf tournament. Thank you each and every one. *(I know I have left someone out of this listing, please forgive me)*

Should you have checked the STAA website or the TBFAA website calendar lately, you would have seen that we have moved our monthly meeting location to Bambino Hueys. This is a great Italian restaurant located just off West Ave and Bitters Rd. We still meet the second Tuesday of each month, and start at 11:30 a.m. Come join us. We need your voice.

Rodney Hooker has been keeping us posted these last five months on what is happening in Austin with the Legislature. He has been appointed to the TBFAA Legislative Committee and has worked with Malcom Reed and Chip Bird on some very important issues. This committee is made up of several members who have donated countless hours of their personal and professional time to work for the betterment of our industry. Next time you see one, tell them how much you appreciate their tireless work on your behalf.

This first half of the year has brought many changes to the security industry in South Texas. Be sure to attend our next meeting *(2nd Tuesday of each month at Bambinos Huey)* to stay abreast of all the changes.

We are pleased that Moe Oroian, Totalcom Management, Inc., has taken the lead in our membership drive. Moe, with the able help of Monda Hatfield in his office, has sent out material to the security dealers of South Texas encouraging them to become members of the South Texas Alarm Assoc. If you live and work anywhere in a box from San Marcos to Corpus, and Victoria to Laredo, be sure to read any material that comes from Moe and Monda. It would be well worth your time to invest a couple of hours a month at our monthly meeting.

South Texas Alarm Association presented our annual check to the San Antonio Blue Santa program at our May 10th meeting. This year the check was for \$5,000.00 again. Roger Byrd is trying to get a good tally of the total amount that the security industry has contributed to the SAPD Blue Santa program, and it looks like it will be in excess of \$60,000.00 in the last ten years. Another example of the security industry working to help our community.

I don't have much more to write now, but would just encourage everyone to stay in touch and if you are not a current member, please give us some serious consideration. Your life would not be as enjoyable today, without the sacrifice and work that has gone on in the years prior to you getting into the security industry. Step up to the plate and be a player today. After all, the more the merrier.

Bill Parsley
President
South Texas Alarm Assoc.



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NFPA Adopts Standard 731 and Guide 730

At a meeting in Las Vegas, on Wednesday June 8th, NFPA Members voted overwhelmingly to adopt NFPA 730 and NFPA 731.

NFPA 731 provides standards to follow when installing and operating intrusion detection systems. It also issues standards for access control, CCTV and the integration of systems. NFPA 730 is a guide that is designed to help assess threat and design an appropriate system.

Major requirements of the standard include:

- * Mandates that all systems have a dedicated circuit breaker for that system.
- * Mandates that all systems will have 24 hr. back up in non-alarm and 15 min. in alarm after the non-alarm state.
- * Mandates that the control panel power supply can fully recharge the batteries w/ in 24 hours.
- * Mandates that all system wiring shall be able to detect a single open, a single ground fault, or a wire to wire short.
- * Mandates that system testing not done by the alarm user be done by qualified personnel, Examples of qualified personnel shall be permitted to include but shall not be limited to individuals with the following qualifications:
 - (1)* Factory trained and certified
 - (2) Certified or licensed by state or local authority
 - (3) Trained and qualified personnel employed by an organization listed by a national testing organization

The Central Station Alarm Association (CSAA), which had some of its members on the committee that formulated NFPA 731, has given support to the effort to create the "Standard for the Installation of Electronic Premise Security Systems." However, the CSAA also expresses reservations on some of the aspects of the proposed standards.

"It is difficult to produce a comprehensive standard, such as the proposed NFPA 731, that is acceptable to all from a 'blank sheet of paper,'" says a statement issued by the CSAA. "While members of CSAA have some issues with the proposed NFPA 731 Standard, CSAA applauds the effort and is optimistic that its representatives will do their best to correct the issues raised in a timely manner."

Meanwhile, the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA) has given its full endorsement of NFPA 731. FARA's board of directors voted June 1 to support adoption of the standard.

"The standard lays out reasonable requirements —

including equipment standards, needed requirements for back-up power, specification of minimum training of design and installation personnel, and procedures for conducting and documenting user training — which can be adopted by individual alarm users, alarm companies, state governments and or localities to improve the overall quality of systems and help to reduce false alarms," says FARA President Norma Beaubien in a statement. "We feel the adoption and enforcement of standards, like NFPA 731, are a critical part of the international effort to reduce false alarms."

The National Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (NBFAA) had raised objections in emails prior to the meeting and asked that NFPA 731 be sent back to committee for further work. The NBFAA cited the vagueness of the language in the proposed standard and the lack of current security technology to adapt to it.

In a letter sent to the NFPA committee on June 3 and released to the media on June 6, NBFAA Vice President George Gunning formally asked the NFPA to reconsider NFPA 731, which has been in the works for three years, and further refine it to better suit the alarm industry.

Story compiled with information from the e-Control Panel-Security Sales & Integration Magazine. To subscribe: E-mail <mailto:subscribe-controlpanel@list.securitysales.com> using the E-mail address from which you wish to receive e-Control Panel.

Congress Members Take Aim At Fire Safety On College Campuses

Fire officials, fire scientists, legislators and university officials convened on Capital Hill on May 25 to discuss solutions to what is being seen as a growing number of fires in college dormitories and off-campus student housing.

Ed Comeau, director of the non-profit Center for Campus Fire Safety and publisher of the online newsletter Campus Firewatch noted that 11 students have died in fires during this academic year. Seventy-five students have died in fires since the beginning of 2000. Comeau noted that 75 percent of student deaths occur in off-campus residences, where most students live.

H.R. 128 College Fire Prevention Act would provide matching federal funds to colleges for installing sprinkler systems and other fire protection technology in student housing.

Campus Fire Safety Right to Know Act will require schools to provide information about fire safety to the Department of Education.

Excerpts from Fire + Emergency Response E-News Visit <http://www.fireandemergencyresponse.com> for information.



Houston Gulf Coast Alarm Association

13302 Canaan Bridge Dr. Houston, TX 77041
281-340-9705 FAX 281-340-5720
www.HGCAA.org

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The Houston Gulf Coast Alarm Association holds membership meetings at Luisioto's Cocina & Cantina 2510 N. Loop West (near the alarm hotel 610 & 290 area) Houston, TX 77092 713-683-8880 on the 2nd Friday of each month from 11:30 am to 1pm. Please use this schedule to make plans and attend as many as you can. Meetings are \$15.00 per person. **We welcome any new attendee with a free lunch.**



North Texas Alarm Association

P.O. Box 836635, Richardson, TX 75083-6635
TEL: 214/352-9352 FAX: 972/871-3338
Web Site: <http://www.ntaa.org>

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The NTAA holds CEU training classes on the third Thursday of the month, every other month, at ADI in Dallas. When you register for these courses, you can receive the required 8-hours of CEU's in one day! For further information, please contact Kathleen Schraufnagel at 972.871.3807.

The NTAA meets on the third Wednesday of each month at Old San Francisco Steakhouse located at 10965 Composite in Dallas 75220 at 11:30am. Lunch is \$15 per person.



South Texas Alarm Association

South Texas Alarm Association
P.O. Box 23280
San Antonio, Texas 78223
210-402-6262

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General membership meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at Bambino Hueys Restaurant, 606 Embassy Oaks Ste 500, San Antonio, TX 78216 (just off West Ave and Bitters Rd); (210) 404-0505

Support your Local Alarm Associations

TBFAA Calendar

June

- 24 TXBFAA Board Meeting, Austin w TCPS Meeting
- 06-10 NFPA Meeting & Expo, Las Vegas
- 10 HGCAA Membership Meeting, Crappitos Restaurant, Houston
- 14 STAA Membership Mtg., Martha's Mexican Rest. San Antonio
- 15 NTAA Membership Mtg., Old San Francisco Steak & Seafood
- 16 NTAA CEU Training, ADI- Farmers Branch
- 17 Fire Prep Class, ADI- Houston
- 23-24 Level 1, ADI- Farmers Branch - Dallas

July

- 08 HGCAA Membership Meeting, Crappitos Restaurant, Houston
- 12 STAA Membership Mtg., Martha's Mexican Rest. San Antonio
- 19-21 Americas' Fire & Security Expo, Miami
- 20 NTAA Membership Mtg, Old San Francisco Steak & Seafood
- 21 NTAA CEU Training, ADI- Farmers Branch
- 18 Fire Prep Class, San Antonio
- 28-29 Level 1, ADI- Houston

August

- 09 STAA Membership Mtg., Martha's Mexican Rest. San Antonio
- 12 HGCAA Membership Meeting, Crappitos Restaurant, Houston
- 17 NTAA Membership Mtg, Old San Francisco Steak & Seafood
- 17 TXBFAA Board Mtg, Old San Francisco Steak & Seafood
- 18 NTAA CEU Training, ADI- Farmers Branch
- 19 Fire Prep Class, ADI- Farmers Branch - Dallas
- 24-25 ISC East, New York
- 25-26 Level 1, ADI- Austin

September

- 07-11 CEDIA Conference Indianapolis
- 09 HGCAA Membership Meeting, Crappitos Restaurant, Houston
- 10-12 CEDIA Expo, Indianapolis
- 12-15 ASIS Exhibits, Orlando
- 13 STAA Membership Mtg., Martha's Mexican Rest. San Antonio
- 21 NTAA Membership Mtg, Old San Francisco Steak & Seafood
- 22 NTAA CEU Training, ADI- Farmers Branch
- 12 Fire Prep Class, San Antonio
- 29 -30 Level 1, ADI- Farmers Branch - Dallas

October

- 6-8 TX Annual Conference, Galveston
- 8 TXBFAA Board Meeting, Galveston
- 6-7 Level 1, Galveston
- 11 STAA Membership Mtg., Martha's Mexican Rest. San Antonio
- 14 HGCAA Membership Meeting, Crappitos Restaurant, Houston
- 19 NTAA Membership Mtg, Old San Francisco Steak & Seafood
- 20 NTAA CEU Training, ADI- Farmers Branch
- 21 -26 CSAA Annual Meeting, Oahu, HI
- 25 Fire Prep Class, ADI- Houston

November

- 10 -11 Level 1, SGI- El Paso
- 11 STAA Membership Mtg, Martha's Mexican Rest. San Antonio
- 12 HGCAA Membership Meeting, Crappitos Restaurant, Houston
- 16 NTAA Membership Mtg, Old San Francisco Steak & Seafood
- 17 NTAA CEU Training, ADI- Farmers Branch
- 18 Fire Prep Class, ADI- Farmers Branch - Dallas

December

- ? TXBFAA Board Meeting, Austin w TCPS Meeting
- 08 -09 Level 1, San Antonio
- 09 HGCAA Membership Meeting, Crappitos Restaurant, Houston
- 13 STAA Membership Mtg, Martha's Mexican Rest., San Antonio
- 16 Fire Prep Class ADI- Houston
- 21 NTAA Membership Mtg, Old San Francisco Steak & Seafood
- 22 NTAA CEU Training, ADI- Farmers Branch

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License Division Fax- 512-424-7726
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 Austin, TX 78701

Who to Contact

- Fire Alarm** -- Claudia Hernandez, Licensing Technician
 512-305-7935, claudia.hernandez@tdi.state.tx.us.
- Manager** -- Susan Light, Manager of Licensing Administration
 512-305-7932, susan.light@tdi.state.tx.us.
- Technical** -- Mark Redlitz, P.E., Director of Licensing
 512-305-7927, mark.redlitz@tdi.state.tx.us.

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