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TBFAA News

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Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association, Inc., [TBFAA] is a non-profit 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 Private Security Bureau and the Texas Fire Marshal’s Office among many other programs.

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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.
“It is the duty of every citizen according to his best capacities to give validity to his convictions in political affairs.” - Albert Einstein

As with a gathering storm, every two years we need to be weather watchers. That is when the Texas Legislature gathers to rain on our lives. I can only presume the motive is to make life better, but as a thunderstorm can give us needed rainfall, it can also unleash destructive forces. We all need to be weather watchers.

The important point is that there is still some apparent apathy in the industry. This applies to those companies who do not join and support the association. Even a non-member has a responsibility to their business and their industry. When we send notices and alerts on important issues it is critical to be prepared and unified in support of the alarm industry.

But there are those who go above and beyond the call of duty. They make sure the industry is well represented. I want to specifically thank Rodney Hooker, Malcolm Reed, Mike Samulin, Chip Bird, Jeff Bright, Debi Ulmer, Dennis Bryant, Rex Adams, and all those who participated in the “Walk the Halls” day. Those specifically mentioned work with lobbyists Dean and Andrea McWilliams and Executive Director Brad Shipp to safeguard your customers and industry interests.

I know through the years you are reminded of the importance of participation, and this is one more.
Houston Gulf Coast Association  
Phone: **281.859.4569**  
Meets 2nd Thursday of the month 11:30 am - 1:00 pm at Cadillac Bar and Grill, Shepard @ I-10  
POC: Debi Ulmer  p: 281.859.4569  e: debi@dispatchcenter.net

North Texas Alarm Association  
Phone: **214.352.9352**  
3rd Thursday of each month. Check website for locations and times  
POC: David Simon  p: 972.871.3778  e: dave.simon@brinks.com

South Texas Alarm Association  
Phone: **210.402.6262**  
Meets 2nd Tuesday of the month. Check website for locations and times  
POC: Bill Parsley  p: 866-491-3400  e: bparsley@dispatchcenter.net

Central Texas Chapter  
Phone: **877.908.2322**  
Meets the 4th Thursday of the month except Oct & Dec at 11:30 am Springhill Restaurant, 1119 FM 1825, Pflugerville, TX 78660.  
POC: Jeff Bright  p: 512.845.1460  e: jbright@brightsecuritygroup.com

Northeast Texas Chapter  
Phone: **877.908.2322**  
Meets quarterly in Longview Area. Plus local meetings will be held in various cities. Check website for times and locations.  
POC: Patrick Craven  p: 903.792.7262  e: pacraven@cableone.net

National Electronic Security Alliance  
Phone: **301.519.9237**  
NESA is a federation of state associations, including TBFAA, established to serve and promote the electronic systems industry at the direction of, and through its affiliated state associations.  
POC: Rex Adams  p: 972.437.1213  e: radams@asdsecurity.com

False Alarm Reduction Association  
Phone: **301.519.9237**  
FARA is an association of persons working in public safety False Alarm Reduction Units that exchanges information, influences legislation and establishes relationships and partnerships with other groups interested in false alarm reduction. TBFAA is an associate member of FARA.  
POC: Brad Shipp  p: 301.519.9237  e: info@faraonline.org
Flyers and bill stuffers to educate your customers on unlicensed activity and fraudulent sales practices are now available on the member’s only pages of the TBFAA Web Site- http://www.tbfaa.org/members/login.asp

If you are a member and need a login please email TBFAA at Exdirector@tbfaa.org.

If you are not a member visit http://www.tbfaa.org/html/how_to_join.asp for more information.
Every day, Houston police respond to nearly 300 burglar and panic alarms. Each of those alarms takes two officers nearly an hour to deal with, and almost every one of those calls is false.

But that wasn’t the case at Louversa Davis’s home. “When I stuck my key in, the door opened by itself,” said Davis, crime victim. The door had been pried open and her home had been ransacked. She called the police and ran to her car where she waited. “I called the police right away at 5 p.m. And they didn’t come until 12:30 a.m.,” Davis said.

HPD says if there is one thing that holds them back from responding to everyone more quickly, it is burglar alarms.

Nearly 95 percent of the calls turn out to be false alarms.

There are already heavy fines for homeowners whose alarms go off repeatedly, but the company in charge of collecting the fines often doesn’t.

To help reduce the problem, the city is ready to hire a more aggressive contractor to put alarm permits online. They are also planning on running a training class for people whose alarms go off for no reason.

"If someone comes and says their cat keeps knocking this thing off, we’re going to say we will do something different. We can’t be sending police cars out many times to the same location," said Alfred Moran, City of Houston Administration and Regulatory Affairs.

The changes, to help free up police so that they will be available for “real” calls, are up for a vote in the Houston City Council on Wednesday (5.6.09).

If it passes, the vendor says they could begin within 90 days.
Pittsburgh police find pot after burglary alarm

5.6.09 - Philadelphia Inquirer - AP - Pittsburgh, PA - Pittsburgh police say they answered a home’s burglar alarm, only to find 265 marijuana plants being grown there. Thirty-three-year-old Jmar Bey is charged with manufacturing marijuana and other charges. He was charged late Tuesday, two days after police say they found the plants, along with a filtration system, a pump and fluorescent lights. Police say they went into the home because they saw an open side door when they responded to the alarm. They didn’t find any intruders.

Breaking news: False alarms slow flight from real fire

5.4.09 - West Island Chronicle - West Island, ON - Many residents among the 200 who are now safe and sound after being evacuated from a Pierrefonds apartment fire earlier this morning said they were so used to false alarms that they brushed this off as one of them at first. “I heard the fire alarm, and we have so many false alarms, so I didn’t take it very seriously,” said Caroline Decelles, who lives on the third floor where the fire broke out at about 4 a.m. today. “It’s when I opened the door and I saw the smoke coming out of the hallway, and it was very thick,” she added, that she realized it was the real deal. Standing near the evacuated apartment building resident Marco Lappna had a similar story. “I heard the alarm at 4 a.m.,” he told The Chronicle. “I thought it was a false alarm,” he said. He only realized the seriousness of the situation when some firefighters knocked on his door. “They came banging on my door,” Lappna said. “They told me, ‘grab a sweater, get out’, ” he added.

NJ: Vineland police nab bathing burglar

4.27.09 - NJ.com - The News of Cumberland County – Vineland, NJ -- Police dispatched to a South 8th Street home Sunday morning for a burglary alarm found a city man inside the home – taking a bath. He told police he was extremely hot, so he decided to take a bath after he’d let himself inside. He added that he was “perfectly fine” until police interrupted him, according to police.
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“the alarm scared him off”
5.6.09 - Oak Hill Gazette - Oak Hill, TX - An Oak Hill liquor store was broken into last Wednesday, but the culprit fled when the burglar alarm went off. Vick Wadehra, owner of Capitol Liquors said the burglar grabbed a few cartons of cigarettes and some pints of vodka as he rushed out the door. The store’s surveillance camera shows the burglar, wearing a hooded sweatshirt, breaking the door glass with a rock and entering the store. He first checked the open cash register, but Wadehra said he keeps no cash in the store overnight. By then, the burglar alarm was blaring, and the burglar decided to take off. The burglary occurred at 3:35 a.m. Wednesday, April 28. "He came to get the cash, but we didn’t have any, and the alarm scared him off," Wadehra said. Austin police are investigating.

3 burglary suspects arrested
4.29.09 - Star Community Newspapers - Lewisville, TX - Quick action on the part of Lewisville police early Tuesday resulted in the arrest of three suspects who apparently had just burglarized North Texas Yamaha. Capt. Todd Taylor, of the Lewisville Police Department, said police responded to a burglary alarm about 2:40 a.m. Tuesday at North Texas Yamaha. Patrol officers and street crimes officers responded swiftly to the alarm and were able to set up a perimeter around the business, Taylor said. Officer Martin Popick saw two people running from the building. He chased down and apprehended the first suspect, Christopher Rodriguez, a 20-year-old Denton man, with assistance from Lt. Chris Butterworth and Officer Bradley Showalter. Officer Jay Alexander caught the second suspect, a juvenile, Taylor said. Officer Roberto Limon located the third suspect, Christine Moncrief, a 20-year-old Denton woman, in a car near the business. Taylor said the suspects entered the building by prying a door open. Near the suspects’ car, officers recovered more than $1,000 worth of merchandise which had been stolen from the business. “Officers recovered all the stolen property and returned it to the business,” Taylor said.
Another important milestone in cooperation between police and the Electronic Security industry is taking place in Texas. The Texas Police Chiefs Association (TPCA) and the TBFAA have agreed in principal to form an alliance to find common ground.

Chairing the TPCA Alarm Management Committee will be Chief Greg Rushin of Plano. Joining Chief Rushin are Burleson Chief Thomas Cowan and Irving Chief Larry Boyd. “We have a lot of manpower responding to alarms,” said Chief Rushin, “and that makes it important for us to work with the industry toward common goals. I hope this group will be able to find some low hanging fruit to grab and accomplish good things for our citizens and their customers.”

TBFAA participants include President Chris Russell, Central Texas Chapter Vice President Jeff Bright, and Vice President Rodney Hooker. “There is obvious common ground we share with police,” said Russell, “and securing life and property is number one. If we can find common territory to become more efficient at that task, I see this as an opportunity to bridge the gap between industry and police.”

An exploratory meeting with the TPCA committee and industry representatives was held in early April at the TPCA annual meeting in Houston. Chief Rushin said the first discussions were to find a general direction and a mission for the group. “I see us dealing with many issues including education, best practices, and legislation. There are a lot of economic challenges that put pressure on police departments and we need to find ways to be more efficient,” said Chief Rushin.

Russell explained the industry wants to help police with that goal. “I am optimistic we can partner with police chiefs across Texas to find ways to reduce false alarms.” Russell also added that before any collaboration is made on legislation more facts have to be gathered. “The TBFAA has already offered to help archive information from police agencies so all the data can be looked at. We need to know, and not speculate, on what works and does not work.”

Russell says there will be more meetings to discuss form and format and then get to work on solutions.

About TPCA

The Texas Police Chiefs Association was founded in 1958 to promote, encourage and advance the professional development of Chiefs of Police and senior police management personnel throughout the State of Texas. TPCA is the only official state law enforcement administrator’s organization in Texas and, as such, it is concerned on a statewide basis with all issues involving the criminal justice system.

Over four decades after its founding, TPCA actively seeks to promote the professional practice of law enforcement administration, to represent the membership and the profession on issues of concern, and to encourage high ethical standards of conduct among law enforcement administrators through its code of ethics. Our membership now includes the law enforcement management personnel of over 300 cities and agencies representing a population served of more than 15 million.
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Legislative Update

Legislative Team Is Working for You

By: Rodney Hooker, TBFAA Legislative Chair

As the 2009 Legislative Session continues, the TBFAA is actively involved on many fronts.

“Walk the Halls” day
On March 17th, the TBFAA had our “Walk the Halls” day at the Capitol. Attendee’s included Chris Russell, Dave Simon, Debra Ulmer, John Helwig, Malcolm Reed, Rex Adams, Wayne Crook, Joe Carr, Sarah Salazar, Mike Samulin, Jeff Bright, Larry Collins, Kelly Ryan and myself. The other industry groups licensed under DPS were also at the Capitol that day, and we were all promoting legislation that affects all industry groups, and our specific agenda for the session. The TBFAA group managed to meet with Ken Armbrister, the Governors Legislative Director, Rachael Schreiber (Rep Joe Drivers Chief of Staff), Erika Akpan (Sen. John Corona’s policy analyst), Don Force (Sen. Deuell’s Chief of Staff), Candace Hargenrader (Clerk of Senate Administration), Patsy Clapper (Rep Stephen Frost Chief of Staff), and had a personal meeting with Rep Tommy Merritt, the new Chairman of the Public Safety Committee. It was a busy day for all involved that ended with a mixer at Serranos Grill. Newly elected State Rep. Alan Fletcher from Houston came by and voiced his willingness to help us with legislation as needed.

The Legislative Team is working on many different bills this session that affect many different aspects of our business. SB809 by Senator Whitmire would have allowed a person with a criminal background to apply for a license just 5 years after the conviction of a felony. We were able to exempt all companies licensed under Chapter 1702 from this requirement by having a floor amendment added the day the bill was passed out of the Senate.

The DPS Sunset bills (SB1017 & HB 2730) are currently stalled in committee due to many changes that have been requested by Legislators. The TBFAA has addressed two changes we require, and I have been told that our concerns are being addressed. We will continue to monitor and help move these bills. The Omnibus Legislation (SB1245 & HB2286) that were developed by all industry groups has been moved through the Senate by Senator Corona, and are now set to go to the House. Rep. Stephen Frost has introduced HB4137 that will address the activities of unlicensed companies installing camera systems, and was heard in committee without opposition.

The contracts bill (HB2672) by Rep Howard is in committee, and has become a major issue for us this session. We have found several bad provisions in this legislation, and are spending a great amount of time to defeat it.

On April 20th, we had several bills go to committee that included the Contracts Bill (HB2672 by Howard) and the Legislative Team was there in force to offer both verbal testimony, and written notices to offer our support, and opposition as required. That day, Jeff Bright, Pat Craven, John Helwig, Dave Simon, Chris Russell, Debra Ulmer, Mike Samulin and I were there to testify and file documents both for and against the bills as required. Dave Simon went before the Committee on Business and Industry and voiced the TBFAA’s strong opposition to Rep Howard’s contracts bill. I must say that Dave did a great job, but was met with a good deal of opposition from several members of that committee.

Continued on Page 16
### 2009 Training Schedule

Here’s just some of the many TBFAA Training Courses Available:

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<th>Level</th>
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<tr>
<td>Level One</td>
<td>Jan 22-23</td>
<td>El Paso</td>
<td>Feb 12-13</td>
<td>Dallas</td>
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<td>Mar 19-20</td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
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<td>McAllen</td>
<td>Dec 10-11</td>
<td>Amarillo</td>
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For more class offerings, information and additional dates, visit www.TBFAA.org or call 877-908-2322.

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Legislative Team Is Working for You

Continued from page 14

By: Rodney Hooker, TBFAA Legislative Chair

That day in the Public Safety Committee, HB2286 and HB2287 by Rep Driver were laid out, and our team was there in strong support of his legislation. I testified on behalf of the TBFAA for both of these bills, and met with no opposition to HB2286, and no significant opposition to the HB2287.

Representative Frost then laid out HB4137 (Camera Bill), and Chris Russell did an outstanding job of explaining its purpose to the committee. There were several questions raised by some of the committee members, but were successfully addressed by Chris and Rep. Frost. Both the Houston and Dallas Police Departments voiced a concern to Chris and I, but not before the committee, and we have since added language that does not affect the bill, but satisfied the needs of the PD’s.

On April 23rd, Chris and I attended the Central Texas Chapter meeting, and then went to the Capitol to see members of the Committee on Business and Industry. With the help of Dean McWilliams, we were able to pull eight of the eleven members of that committee off the floor of the House while in session and discuss in detail our reasons for opposing the Contracts Bill.

On Thursday, April 30th the bill came back up in Committee and the TBFAA offered an amendment that removed the exemption for governmental entities, banks, electric utilities, gas utilities, and telecommunication companies. It also removed the very damaging “Deceptive Trade Practice” language from the bill. Dean McWilliams provided Rep. Gary Elkins from Houston the amendment and he introduced it to the committee. He stated, “If this change in law is good enough for alarm companies, it’s good enough for everyone else”. The bill was passed out of committee with the amendment, and is now headed for the Calendars.

We expect that this will cause many other industries to work toward defeating this legislation. Dean McWilliams stated “we owe a big debt of gratitude to Rep. Elkins (R-Houston), Chairman Deshotel (D-Beaumont), Rep. Quintanilla (D-El Paso) and Rep. Rob Orr (R-Burleson) for supporting this amendment”. TBFAA members from around the state made numerous calls to the offices of these gentlemen before the bill came back up, and it has paid great dividends. Thanks to all of you who helped with this matter.

As things change at the speed of light in Austin, this information will no doubt change before this is printed. You can trust that the TBFAA Legislative Team will stay on top of the situation, and work in your best interest. As a side note, Mr. George Craig, the former Chairman of the PSB has joined our Association, and offered his talents and knowledge to help the TBFAA meet our goals this session. We welcome Mr. Craig, and I can assure you that he has already helped with several issues critical to the TBFAA. Pray for our legislators that they make good decisions for our industry and the citizens of Texas.

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Central Texas Chapter Prewires Austin Children’s Shelter

By: Frank Chavez - frank@chavezpr.com

In March the Central Texas Chapter (CTC) of the TBFAA began an ambitious project to help the Austin Children’s Shelter. Construction began on a new eight building complex for the shelter and the CTC/TBFAA is donating equipment and installing fire and security systems. Five residential cottages will provide emergency shelter and longer-term care, and three support buildings will offer expanded educational and other services.

The Austin Children’s Shelter is an emergency shelter offering a safe haven for children who are removed from their homes due to life-threatening abuse or neglect.

“There was an obvious need for security and fire protection,” said Jeff Bright, Vice President CTC/TBFAA. “The shelter needs to keep a safe environment for the children they serve.” On March 14th CTC/TBFAA pre-wired the Program Services Building. The buildings will be wired for access control, closed circuit television & intrusion detection.


Construction of the new facility began in the spring of 2008 and is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2009. This new facility will not only increase the number of children that can be served at one time, but also expand education programs and ultimately provide family based services. If other companies would like to donate to this effort they can get more information at www.austinchildrenshelter.org
To catch pharmacy thieves, one drug company has funded a Web-based incident database; it also pays rewards for crime tips.

While neither government nor industry tracks or can quantify prescription drug crime nationally, it is estimated to be the source of between a quarter and 30 percent of the country’s drug problem, according to John Burke, commander of the Warren County, Ohio Drug Task Force and president of the National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators.

A favorite of pharmaceutical thieves is OxyContin, a pill for acute chronic pain. The rate of pharmacy thefts, burglaries, and robberies spurred by OxyContin grew so high that some drug stores and chains considered removing the drug, manufactured by the Stamford-based Purdue Pharma, LP, from their inventories. It became apparent to the manufacturer that it had to find a way to help stores reduce the thefts.

First, the company tried to assess the causes. One problem was a lack of intelligence sharing, says J. Aaron Graham, who became vice president of corporate security at Purdue in 2000.

In an effort to jump-start interagency communications, Graham got Purdue to fund a Web-based open-source database of pharmaceutical crimes that any registered members of law enforcement, private security, or the pharmacy industry would be free to search. Launched in 2003, it was dubbed Rx Pattern Analysis Tracking Robberies & Other Losses (RxPATROL).

According to RxPatrol, 85 percent of pharmacy robberies happen in those without an alarm, 86 percent happen in pharmacies without a surveillance camera.

RxPATROL also uses its membership mailing list to circulate best practices among peers, such as recommendations that pharmacies install conspicuous CCTV cameras, which they believe are a strong deterrent to pharmacy crime.

Motion detectors and backup power sources for alarm systems are also recommended. Graham has seen multiple cases in which a perpetrator cuts power to a pharmacy at night, then falls back and waits for police to respond to the remote alarm. Often police contact a manager, who tells police that store staff will deal with the problem in the morning. Once police leave, the thieves make their move.

Anyone who wants to report an incident can also send photos or other images, including CCTV frames, to the RxPATROL site. Other features are continually being added.

For more information visit www.rxpatrol.com

### Entry By Location

- **Front Door**: 46.92%
- **Back Door**: 21.64%
- **Window**: 19.36%
- **Wall**: 6.15%
- **Ceiling**: 4.10%
- **Basement**: 1.14%

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**Schedule**

**Wednesday- October 7th, 2009**
Golf- Essentials of False Alarm Reduction

**Thursday- October 8th, 2009**
Classes, Essentials of False Alarm Reduction & Awards Dinner

**Friday- October 9th, 2009**
Updates, Classes, Membership Meeting, Trade Show & Casino Night

**Saturday- October 10th, 2009**
Farewell Breakfast & TBFAA Board Meeting

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**Location**

Omni San Antonio Hotel at the Colonnade
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**About the Hotel**

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The National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA) was formed to promote communication between state associations, to help them solve common problems and to help them serve their members. Visit www.nesaus.org for more information.

The Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (TBFAA) is a non-profit organization comprised of a large number of professional security and fire alarm companies that operate in the State of Texas. Visit tbfaa.org for more information.

TBFAAA Member Benefit
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The Texas Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (TBFAA) is offering the National Electronic Security Alliance (NESA)/El Dorado plan. NESA has partnered with El Dorado Insurance Agency to create an insurance plan for alarm industry professionals.

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