

Questions To Ask BEFORE Buying A Home Burglar Alarm

The Company:

1. How long has the company been in business?
2. What is the alarm background of their installers?
3. Do they have staff available 24 hours a day in case of false alarms?
4. Can they work with you on getting a cut in your insurance premiums if you install one of their alarm systems?
5. Do you lease the equipment, or can you buy it outright?
6. If you buy it outright, for how long is the equipment guaranteed?
7. Do they sell maintenance contracts?
8. Is the company a member of any local business or merchant's group?
9. Will the company pay the fee for False Alarms charges incurred when it is due to malfunction of the system itself? Will they put this in writing?

The Equipment:

1. Is the equipment approved by Underwriters Laboratory (U.L.)?
2. Is the system electrically or battery operated? If electrically operated, does it switch automatically to battery power without activating the alarm in the event of a power failure?
3. If the alarm system is activated, will it automatically shut off after a reasonable alert time period (10 – 15 minutes)?
4. After the system is activated, will it automatically reset if attacked again?
5. If the control switch or box is exposed, will it activate the alert if attacked?
6. Is the system tamper-proof (i.e., wires and sensors protected from the elements, rain, wind, etc.)?
7. If it is a local system (audible to immediate area), does it ring loud enough to attract the attention of your neighbors?
8. Do your neighbors know about the system and what to do if it goes off?

Consumer Information:

1. Have you reviewed the consumer reports on burglar alarms?
2. Have you looked at several different burglar alarm systems to compare price, warranty, and service?
3. Have you decided how much you are willing to spend?
4. Have you decided what areas of the house you want secured with a burglar alarm system?
5. Do you have good door and window security such as?

- Solid core door for exterior use?
 - Deadbolt locks with 1” throw and case-hardened cylinder guard?
 - Maximum security strikeplates?
 - Locking or pinning devices for windows?
6. Do you live in an area where neighbors cannot see the entrances into your home?
 7. Do you live in an isolated area?
 8. Do you live in a high crime area?
 9. Do you keep valuable collections in your home?
 10. Do you leave your home unoccupied for long periods of time?

If you have answered “yes” to most or all of questions 6 through 10, a burglar alarm may be particularly useful to you.

11. Are you aware that there is a charge for billable false alarms?

In excess of 2 per calendar year - \$100

In excess of 10 per calendar year - \$200

In excess of 20 per calendar year - \$300

12. Have you considered installing a home safe as an alternative to an alarm system?

In some cases, a safe is a lower cost alternative to a burglar alarm.

Remember:

A burglar alarm system complements, but does not replace good neighbors or a good home security.

Wireless vs. Wired

Information provided by:
Richfield Police Crime Prevention Unit
6700 Portland Avenue South
Richfield, MN 55423

