

<b>8003.01</b>	<b>Response to Fire Alarm Activation Standard Operating Guide</b>	
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*This procedure is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The procedure should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this procedure, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.*

**Related Policies:**  
**Replaces Policy:**  
**Applicable HI Statutes:**

**I. PURPOSE**

This Standard Operating Guide establishes operational procedures for responding to automatic fire alarms.

**II. APPLICABILITY**

1. This procedure shall be utilized to establish minimum response criteria for supervised and unsupervised automatic fire alarms.
2. This SOG applies to initial response orders for apparatus and personnel. This SOG shall not restrict the in-district Officer from increasing the amount of responding assets.
3. This SOG does not apply to heat rise, flame flicker, infrared detectors or sprinkler system flow alarms if reported.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

**Automatic Alarm** - A building fire emergency notification system consisting of audible and visual alarm notification appliances installed within all common-use areas of a building, manual alarm stations installed at every exit from every level, and automatic initiating devices (i.e., smoke detectors, heat detectors, or flame detectors) installed throughout all areas of the building.

**First Due Response** – The in-district primary response, usually consisting of an Engine Crew.

**Flow Alarm** - An alarm system that is installed within a building equipped with an automatic fire sprinkler system. Its purpose is to monitor water flow through the automatic sprinkler system and the position of any sprinkler system control valves.

**Full First Alarm Assignment** – The total make up of apparatus and personnel to handle the response to an emergency in accordance with dispatch protocols, usually consisting of multiple companies. (i.e. Initial Alarm Assignments)

**IV. PROCEDURE**

Upon notification of a fire alarm, Dispatch will deploy emergency response units in accordance with the following order:

- Alarm with no confirmation of smoke or fire.
  - In-district Engine Response.
  - Remainder of full first alarm assignment, Stand-by in quarters
- Alarm with confirmation of smoke, fire or more than one device activated.
  - Full first alarm assignment.
- Alarms in the following districts will have the full first alarm dispatched to the scene, regardless of the type of fire alarm, due to the response distance of out of district resources.
  - 11 – Pahala

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- 15 – North Kohala
- 17 – Laupahoehoe
- 19 – Volcano
- 20 – Ocean View

### V. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. The first arriving unit shall do a size up to determine if a visible emergency exists (water, smoke, or flames visible).
  - a. Look for a red bell on the outside of the building. If the bell is ringing, water is very likely to be flowing out of the fire sprinkler system.
2. Formally establish command when appropriate.
3. If a visible emergency exists, take appropriate actions for the type of occupancy involved and transmit a full first alarm assignment.
4. If no visible emergency exists, request that the Dispatch verify with the alarm company that a responsible party has been contacted and is responding.
5. Check the premise for a key box. If key box is present and has functional key inside, access the building.
  - a. If a key box is not present or functional keys to access the building are not provided, fire companies should determine if forcible entry is necessary based on size up. These decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and are founded on protecting property. The Fire Department will not be held liable for damages, because of not forcing entry or forcing entry if a key box or functional keys are not provided.
  - b. Proceed to the Fire Alarm Control Panel to determine the status of the alarm system and indicate possible reasons for the fire alarm activation (alarm, trouble, or zone). Also, this will assist with identifying the location(s) of the alarm system device(s) that may be causing the alarm.
  - c. Check Pre-Plans as applicable for more site information.
6. While a systematic investigation of the premises is taking place to determine the device(s) that activated the system, the Fire Alarm Control Panel can be silenced if a switch exists to do so, but under no circumstance should the panel reset button be pushed at this time.
  - a. If water, smoke, or flames are found during the investigation take appropriate action for the occupancy involved.
7. If after the investigation has been completed and a determination of what caused the system to activate cannot be found, allow the alarm system to remain in silence mode until the emergency contact person responsible for the occupancy resets the system.
8. If it has been determined that a pull station was inadvertently activated and there are no other devices activated, firefighters may reset the pull station if possible and the alarm system.
9. If the emergency contact person is not responding or has extended ETA, firefighters may reset the system and go back in service. We cannot have fire companies unavailable on calls where no indication of an emergency exists.
  - a. The company officer should relay the alarm conditions to the building occupants if present.
  - b. Fire Dispatch shall be informed if resetting the alarm without the emergency contacts presence.

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10. False alarms should be categorized in one of the following four incident types:
- a. Alarm system sounded due to malfunction
  - b. Smoke detector activation due to malfunction
  - c. Sprinkler activation due to malfunction
  - d. Extinguishing system activation due to malfunction