



Single-Action Panic Buttons

The convenience of summoning help at the push of a button is a feature which alarm users can appreciate. Most alarm systems can be activated through the use of a panic button. Some examples of panic buttons include: key fobs, portable pendants and fixed buttons, just to name a few. When an alarm is activated, the user can take comfort in the fact that public safety personnel have been notified.



While panic buttons provide peace-of-mind, they also generate a large number of false alarms. One unique feature of panic buttons is the ability to generate silent alarms. However, when the appropriate safeguards are not instituted, silent alarms create a dangerous situation. The alarm user, law enforcement personnel and the general public are all put in danger by false alarms. Below are three different styles of panic buttons and some ways to prevent false alarms.

Styles of Panic Buttons

- **Key Fobs:** Allows alarm users to arm or disarm their systems and often have a single-action panic button. Key fobs regularly find their way into the hands of children. Children regard the key fobs as playthings. Keep the fob in an area that is out of reach of children. Putting the fobs on a key chain, in a pocket or a purse can also result in an accidental activation.
- **Portable Pendants:** Usually worn around the neck or wrist and can be inadvertently activated when the pendant is bumped or pressed against an object. It is recommended that pendants be worn on the outside of clothing where the user can easily activate the device. When worn on the outside of clothing, it is easier to minimize accidental activation.
- **Fixed Buttons:** Provides for easy concealment of the panic alarm. Concealment allows for activation during situations where calling 9-1-1 is not possible. However, the concealed panic buttons are activated unintentionally by bumps. Contact your alarm company about recessed dual-action alarms. Dual-action alarms can help to prevent accidental activation.

FARA recommends that panic alarms should be audible and only activate when two recessed buttons are pressed at the same time or by depression of a single button after lifting the cover that normally protects it.

FARA recommends that a call be made to the alarm site, before public safety is contacted, for all panic alarms that sound an audible alarm at the site. Audible alarms have the advantage of alerting all occupants that the alarm has been activated. The disadvantage is that the sound may startle the criminal or cause them to take aggressive action.

Silent alarms avoid alerting the criminal, but also do not let the user know if they are activated accidentally. Because of the danger of alerting the criminal on site, a verification call should not be made on silent panic alarms.

Please understand that if law enforcement doesn't see signs of criminal or other activity, they might not forcibly enter to further verify a panic alarm and that there is someone inside who requires assistance.