

# THE SENTINEL

A Newsletter from Dial One

Volume 10, Number 3

Winter 2002

Dear Readers,

We are proud to present the holiday issue of *The Sentinel*. This newsletter is meant to be a resource on important safety and security issues pertinent to you and your property. We appreciate your business and hope you find the information we provide useful to your business and home.



John Lindberg, President

In this issue, you'll find information about a flexible emergency response system called the Medical Alert System. The device is designed to help senior citizens maintain independent lives while also feeling safe and secure in their own homes. You'll also read about how timely alarm system maintenance can help prevent system failure.

Dial One is proud to have been serving the Tri-state since 1979, specializing in security systems, fire alarms, closed-circuit camera systems and card access control systems for residential and business customers.

If you have any comments about this newsletter or suggestions about topics you would like to see covered, please call me at (513) 527-4400. Happy holidays!

Sincerely,

John Lindberg

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## Medical Alert Systems Give Independence to Seniors

Senior citizens living alone is a fact of life. Like all of us, seniors want to be independent and many prefer to live in their own homes where they feel safe and secure. Studies, however, have shown that one out of three seniors will fall at home, risking injury. Serious medical complications caused by a fall are usually due to long delays in receiving help.

Dial One Security is pleased to offer a solution for caring people with loved ones who may need help living independently. The Medical Alert System delivers the peace of mind that comes with knowing you're in touch with emergency personnel if the need arises. The system uses state-of-the-art wireless technology and your standard telephone line to keep you in touch 24 hours a day, seven days a week without ever touching your telephone keypad. Push the emergency button and you receive immediate help. You will never be left alone again.

The moment a panic signal is received at the Dial One Central Station the caller's personal profile is displayed. Central Station operators immediately dispatch emergency personnel to your home and notify designated neighbors, friends, family members and physicians of the situation.

The Linear 24-hour personal emergency reporting system is a flexible emergency, fire and inactivity-reporting package. Features include:

- Temporary or permanent installation
- Braille characters for emergency, home and clear functions
- A delayed, silent alarm feature
- Definable inactivity period reporting: eight, 12 or 24 hours
- 32-hour battery back-up
- Distinct alarm tones for emergency and fire alarm conditions
- UL-listed per standard 1637

A Medical Alert System is insurance for your future. Used properly, the device can help safeguard you from unfortunate situations today, tomorrow and into the future.

The system is also very affordable: \$28/month (paid quarterly) plus a one-time installation fee of \$75 with no other charges. If you are interested in having the system installed in your home or the home of a family member, call Dial One at (513) 527-4400 today.



## Employee Spotlight: Teresa Miller

It's difficult for Teresa Miller to boil her job down into one, short and simple title. Teresa, who has been with Dial One for almost three years, handles a wide variety of tasks including dealing with accounts payable and receivable, conducting remote programming and assisting with many other tasks.

Teresa said her favorite part of the job is programming security systems for Dial One customers. She also enjoys assisting customers with technical service and helping resolve customer problems. "I like it when a customer calls in with a problem, and I have the opportunity to help them solve the issue by working with them to troubleshoot their system," she says.

Originally from Elyria, Ohio, Teresa has lived in Cincinnati most of her life. Prior to joining the Dial One staff, Teresa worked as a head teller at U.S. Bank. In her spare time, she likes to travel and take photographs.

## Holiday Business Closings

If your business will be closed on certain holidays, please notify the Central Station or the general Dial One office as soon as possible so that the proper action may be taken.

Central Station (513) 921-4300  
Dial One (513) 527-4400

## Direct Dialing

If you need to contact a specific Dial One staff member, you can reach the person more quickly by utilizing Dial One's direct dialing system. Simply dial (513) 527-3033 and enter the appropriate extension.

Teresa Miller, Accounting	Ext. 101
Rob Singer, Customer Service	Ext. 102
John Lindberg, President	Ext. 103
Scott Watkins, Service	Ext. 104
Chester Millay, General Manager	Ext. 105
Mike Roberts, Sales	Ext. 106
Dennis Toon, Sales Manager	Ext. 107
Jim Dabbelt, Sales	Ext. 108
Vince Stricklen, Sales	Ext. 109



## Maligned at the Movies

Hollywood blockbusters rarely portray proper use of sprinkler systems

Ladies and gentlemen, this year's pick for the most inaccurate depiction of an automatic fire sprinkler system goes to "Changing Lanes," a spring 2002 release starring Ben Affleck and Samuel L. Jackson that includes the worst mass-marketed bit of fire sprinkler misinformation since Mel Gibson's Martin Riggs character operated every sprinkler in a Chinese restaurant by activating one manual pull station in 1998's "Lethal Weapon 4."

"Changing Lanes" panders to the most common fire sprinkler misconception of all: when one sprinkler opens, they all open.

With the exception of highly specialized deluge systems used in munitions factories and other extremely hazardous occupancies where there's a race to get ahead of a fire, automatic sprinkler systems just don't work that way. Only the individual sprinkler that's heated above its operating temperature activates and one or two sprinklers are usually enough to control most fires.

### Getting it right

Undoubtedly, Hollywood is a major source of the "all-sprinklers-open" myth, having exercised artistic license in this regard in television and films. Obviously, a fire sprinkler putting out fires isn't blockbuster entertainment. But system response can be depicted properly, and Hollywood doesn't always get it wrong.

In "Hocus Pocus," for example, the protagonist, Max, uses a bluff to hold off a threesome of witches. He applies the flame of a lighter directly to an automatic sprinkler to, in his words, "summon the burning rains of death." That one sprinkler operates, the others don't.

My personal favorite sprinkler cameo is in 1995's "Eraser." Bad guy James Caan grabs Vanessa Williams away from her protector, played by Arnold Schwarzenegger, and activates bulletproof sliding glass doors to trap Schwarzenegger in a corridor. Displaying an impressive knowledge of the NFPA 101® Life Safety

Code® requirement that "doors unlock upon operation of an approved supervised sprinkler system," Schwarzenegger shoots out the nearest sprinkler bulb. He follows up his remarkable codesmanship with a demonstration of remarkable marksmanship. Though a single sprinkler would have done the job of opening the doors, he shoots out at least two more sprinkler bulbs farther down the corridor, using only three shots while standing in the same spot.

### Reaching a new low

To some extent, this year's "Changing Lanes" sets a new low in sprinkler cinema because the sprinkler scene simply doesn't make sense. Ben Affleck's character wants to peek at a confidential file in his boss's office and apparently decides a general building evacuation will give him the opportunity. He holds a lighter to a sprinkler in his own office, and the bulb in that single sprinkler activates.

That was really all the plot needed. The sprinkler system in a high-rise office, such as the one depicted, would have been supervised in accordance with NFPA 72®, National Fire Alarm Code®, which requires that a sprinkler water-flow switch serve as an alarm system initiating device. Thus, the alarm system would have been evacuated, based on the one sprinkler flowing, in accordance with the requirements of NFPA 101.

Instead, the film shows all the sprinklers flowing, and Affleck staying behind after the others have evacuated, reading the forbidden file in his boss's office. The writers apparently weren't bothered by the question of how he'd manage to avoid suspicion when he returned the wet file to the cabinet with the dry files.

Trite bits of artistic license like the all-sprinklers-open routine have long had a delirious effect on the public's image of sprinklers. But when they start to damage the credibility of a movie's plot, it's probably time Hollywood started paying attention to how things really work.

*Reprinted from the NFPA Journal, September/October 2002 Edition*



## Burglary Blunders

Co. 2002 "News of the Weird," Universal Press Syndicate

### Hil l bil ly Hij acker

From the September 24 issue of the Bozeman Chronicle: "A caller reported at 7 p.m. Sunday that a man was holding a knife to a woman in a car parked in a parking lot. Officers responded and determined that the woman was actually using the man's knife to clean her teeth."

### No Exit Strategy

David Christopher Lander was arrested in Florida in July, locked inside the car he was burglarizing. While inside the vehicle, Lander had accidentally triggered the car alarm, automatically locking the doors and trapping himself. And in September, Andrew Birch was arrested in Scotland after becoming wedged in the window of the car he was climbing through in order to (according to authorities) steal the vehicle.

### Clueless Cops

Police in Cleveland picked up Betty Horton, 44 (and with no criminal record), in July for the third time in eight months when they were really looking for Bettie Horton, 37. A police official said he could not guarantee that the incident would cease to happen again.

## A Statistical View

- In 1998, there were 200 Christmas tree fires in United States homes, resulting in 11 injuries and \$8 million in direct property damage.
- Between 1994 and 1998, there were 9,930 home fires per year caused by candles, with an annual average of 119 deaths, 1,043 injuries and \$144.5 million in associated property damage.
- The leading cause of Christmas tree fires and property damage was short circuit or ground fault (21 percent). In this category, electrical failure other than short circuit ranked second in the number of fires, injuries and property damage other than the unknown category.
- Unspecified short circuit problems accounted for an average of more than 100 fires (20 percent), no civilian deaths, 14 civilian injuries and \$3.3 million in direct property damage from 1994 to 1998.

Source: National Fire Protection Agency's (NFPA) "Home Product Report, Forms and Types of Materials First Ignited in Fires" and NFPA's "Candle Fires in U.S. Homes and Other Occupancies."



## Randy's Reminder

Testing Your Alarm System

In the past I've highlighted the importance of testing your security system. Security product manufacturers recommend systems be completely tested on a regular basis. Some even suggest testing should be done weekly. With the constant demands today's lifestyle puts on our time, remembering to test the alarm system often escapes us. Despite this, alarm systems can still fail to operate for a number of reasons and may result in serious problems that regular maintenance can help prevent.

Over the years, I have seen systems that appear to be working properly: the door beeps when it is opened, the keypad turns the alarm system on and off and smoke detectors and motion detectors have working lights. Despite this, when a storm knocks out the power to the house, the alarm system still goes dead because the back-up battery may not be charged. We've also come across times when doors that are not used very often have a contact that was painted over, therefore when the door opens nothing happens because the contact is painted shut. Magnetic contacts can stick as well, resulting in the problem door or window not responding to an intrusion. Sirens can also fail to sound when the system is tripped. The best way to find system failures is to completely test the system.

Dial One recommends that systems be tested annually, but more frequently would be ideal. A system should be tested any time changes are made to telephone services or systems, during remodeling work or any time other electronic equipment at the location has failed due to a storm or construction-related power breakdown. When you want to test your system, always call the Central Station first, (513) 921-4300. The operator will ask you

a few questions to establish your identity, then verify your desired test duration. Once the system is in test mode, any signal the Central Station receives will be logged without police and/or fire departments being contacted.

To begin the test, arm your system and open windows or doors that are tied into the system. Try to test every aspect of the system. Walk in front of all motion detectors and push any panic buttons you may have. When the siren sounds, your telephone should go dead (this is normal) while the system transmits a signal to the Central Station. In most cases, your keypad will display the zone(s) that have gone into alarm with a solid red light by the zone number. Before disarming the system, check you telephone for a dial tone. If you have a dial tone, then disarm the system. If there is no tone, wait 30 seconds and try again. Once the system is disarmed, call the Central Station. The operator will verify that you are done testing, tell you what signals were received and identify possible problem areas.

If your schedule simply does not allow time for you to personally test your system, a Dial One Service Technician can perform an on-site test for you at a minimal fee. The technician will do a more in-depth system test, which includes testing the battery, cleaning the smoke detectors, checking motion detector coverage areas and investigating for painted contacts.

If you would like the Service Department to test your system, call Dial One at (513) 527-4400 and ask for Scott Watkins. As always, should you have any questions about the services and products Dial One provides, feel free to call us. We are happy to help you in any way we can.

## How To Reach Us:

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If you have any questions or suggestions that you would like us to address in this newsletter, let us know. You can write to:

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Happy Holidays From Dial One



*Best wishes for a peaceful and safe holiday season.*

General Electronic Security, Inc.  
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