

## **Maintenance Agreement with Rotec Alarms Ltd for your burglar alarm system.**

This document is written in plain English to make sure there is no doubt as to what is covered within our maintenance agreement and what is not. Our reasons for certain elements of this agreement are also explained without a Latin phrase in sight so you can understand the fairness of our contract with you and you with us.

Customers with a maintenance agreement can call us out to attend to any issues relating to their burglar alarm without being invoiced for a call out charge. This guarantee extends to 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We do however reserve the right to cancel this agreement by making a full refund of the payment you have made for one year's annual maintenance if we feel that a customer is abusing this facility. Our right to cancel this agreement with you is there for the following reason.

We do not expect customers to call us out just because they have had a single false alarm for example. False alarms can happen for any number of reasons and do not need to be investigated by an engineer. Persistent false alarming is a different matter and obviously does need the attention of an engineer. The most common causes of false alarms are listed below to help customers avoid some common problems.

1. Motion sensors can be triggered by flying insects such as moths and wasps settling on the lenses of the sensors. They can also be triggered by spiders making webs in the corners where the sensors are mounted. It is a good idea to vacuum around the sensors when you are cleaning because there is a space between the sensor and the wall that creepy crawlies find rather inviting and frequently take up residence. Other things that trigger motion sensors are helium party balloons left in protected rooms, Christmas decorations hanging from ceilings and of course pets that get into these areas.
2. Shock sensors can be triggered by exceptionally bad weather. Claps of thunder or heavy hail stone can trigger a shock sensor on a door or window. Large glazed areas are also susceptible to bird strikes which are heavy enough to trigger an alarm event. One other unusual occurrence is the pitch of a dog's bark or child's cry for example. Just as an opera singer can shatter a Champagne glass we find that just the right pitch of sound can trigger a shock sensor.

This useful information is provided to help you identify if a visit from an engineer is necessary but please don't ever hesitate to call us if you have the slightest concern.

For a call out during unsociable hours this is usually to do with an alarm that refuses to be silenced. These situations are very rare indeed but if they happen you can expect our engineer to jump out of bed, call round to your property, silence your alarm, and then return at a more convenient time to investigate and rectify the problem. He will not stay there all night looking for a fault. This is not always necessary however due to the cut off timers in all our external sounders. If your system has been damaged in any way this can trigger the alarm to sound using its own external battery and it can't be stopped without climbing up to the outside sounder to deactivate it. The external box will be equipped with a 15 minute cut off timer however. This means the alarm will usually silence before our engineer can arrive and get his ladder up to the box. We often have the situation where by the time a customer has decided to call the engineer the system then silences whilst they are

talking on the phone. Please do not hesitate to call any time if your system will not switch off because if you have an older system these cut off timers might not be present.

### **The time we take to respond.**

We will respond as quickly as we can to any issues relating to your system but we do need to prioritise jobs and use our engineers efficiently. The engineer who visits will be extremely polite and endeavour to fix your problem swiftly. But please be aware that he is just a guy trying to fix your alarm, he is not your butler. Any customers who are rude or abusive to our staff will be refunded their maintenance charge and removed from our records.

We obviously respond instantly if an alarm is sounding and can't be stopped. But as explained above, even this dire problem can solve itself by the cut off timer kicking in. So if our nearest engineer is over half an hour away on another job we would ask to wait and see if the 15 minute timer works and schedule a visit when he is finished where he is or when another engineer is closer and/or available.

If you are reporting a 'non-urgent' problem then we will make an appointment at a mutually convenient time.

Something that is not an urgent call out is your system being off line. We have had issues with some customers who hardly ever use their burglar alarm and when their taxi is booked to go to the airport they find their panel is off line. (This relates to customers who use an app on their smartphone to control their alarm system and get communications from it). These alarm systems can still be operated with the keypad in the property and it is not critical that we send an engineer across the city to solve your IT issue. So if you use your system infrequently please check a few days before you go away that everything is OK. This gives our team a chance to rectify any issues without any drama.

Another situation that is not an emergency is that your alarm system won't set. Believe it or not we once had a customer who insisted that we attend in the early evening because it was time for her to go to bed and her alarm wouldn't set. We did as requested but we no longer service that system.

### **Parts Guarantee**

Any parts that need to be changed will be chargeable after the guarantee from our suppliers has expired. In the case of Risco equipment (the vast majority of the equipment we use is supplied by Risco Group PLC) we have an exceptional 3 year warranty. This warranty means we can change faulty equipment for our customers and Risco will replace it for us free of charge for a period of three years from your installation date. Parts purchased from other suppliers are only guaranteed for the usual 12 months. You will only be charged for parts if they are out of guarantee with our suppliers. **You will however always be charged for replacement batteries** because these are a wear and tear item. WE are obviously not going to pay for the batteries required in YOUR alarm system.

### **Non Maintenance Customers**

Our customers do not have to sign up to our maintenance agreement if they prefer not to. We will still attend to any issues and honour the three year guarantee on Risco equipment but customers will **always be invoiced our prevailing call out charge every time we visit** if they do not have a current maintenance agreement in place. These call out charges will only be applicable after your initial 12 month guarantee that applies to any new system supplied and fitted by Rotec Alarms Ltd. Our call out charges will be shown on our website at 2 different rates depending on the time that our engineer is needed. Please note the difference between the Monday to Friday charge 8-00 am to 8-00 pm and our night time and weekend call out charge.

### **Items not covered by our Annual Maintenance Agreement**

There are some issues that are not covered by our Annual Maintenance Agreement which I would like to draw your attention to as politely as possible. It is fairly common sense but as this is our legal contract with you we need to put these exceptions into writing.

1. If your system or the wiring of your system is damaged by other trades people, intruders or yourselves we will charge a **half price call out charge** to repair it for customers with a live maintenance contract. This half price charge does not usually cover the costs associated with a visit from our engineer but it does help if you shoulder our financial burden for something that is not our fault in any way. I think this is just common sense.
2. This one is a bit tricky and deserves some explanation. If you change your internet provider or reset your router which results in one of our engineers having to attend we will charge a **half price call out charge**. Let me expand on this to make our position perfectly clear. We have had a number of customers who like to change broadband providers regularly to save 2 quid a month on their bill. They then think its fine for one of our engineers to jump in his van, fill up with diesel and fight his way through the city traffic to fix any issues that this may have caused with their online security systems. We are a very nice company and we do all we can to be fair with our customers; but some things are just not our fault. So we need to include this common sense exception from our maintenance agreement. Why should Rotec Alarms Ltd be liable for the costs to do this work when the sort of person who wants to save ten bob a week on his internet bill certainly wouldn't dream of paying for fuel and wages to help somebody else save some money? It's here in black and white so don't pretend to be surprised if you get a small charge because one of our employees has driven to your house or business to do some work for you. It's only a little bit of money and this is of course perfectly fair.

### **Payment for our annual maintenance agreement**

Our maintenance agreement is AUTOMATED and **only payable by direct debit**. Customers who have been with us a long time will know that we used to take payment on the day that we came to do the service. This was how our business was built and it worked fine for about 80% of our customers. As our business has grown the remaining 20% have become increasingly troublesome for our office staff to manage.

**Here's how our old system worked.**

The day your system is installed is your due service date the following year. The office administrator would phone to make an appointment for one of the engineers to come to do the service at a mutually convenient time. This is not always straight forward and lots of people had perfectly legitimate reasons for being difficult to contact. They might be on holiday or be working away for example. But the office girls are relentless and they keep calling until they get an answer. They leave voice mails, send emails, text messages and so on. They even resort to old fashioned snail mail if they have no luck after a couple of months. Sometimes they get through to somebody who is just SO BUSY that they can't possibly make an appointment at that time, but the girls are invited to continue their despairing pursuit until the timing is better. What happens then is a **huge grey area** in our business and **the direct debit system is our solution to this problem.** A customer who has given us the run around for 4 or 5 months then has an issue with their system and they call to book their 'service visit'. This is not a 'service visit'. It is actually a call out to a system that is out of warranty. I know that.... my customer knows that.... and anybody reading this contract knows that. But being the nice company that we are we still attended and fixed the problem for our annual maintenance charge and turned a blind eye to their audacity. Then 6 or 7 months later when the service due date arises again the customer will add insult to injury by saying it isn't due for another 4 or 5 months??!! This is of course nonsense. They simply chose to join the RAC but not until they were on the hard shoulder, and now they want their service date moved. They actually want a service agreement where they only pay twice every three years if they have their way and they consider my staff impertinent if they point out this devious manoeuvre. The problem with being a nice company to deal with is that some people will try to take advantage. This wasn't a problem when the company was small but as our customer base has now grown into the thousands we need a clear black and white contract. Our staff also need to know the rules so that everybody is treated the same and everybody knows what to do.

**So this is what will happen in future for our maintenance customers.**

You will receive an email 7 days before your account is debited to inform you of the charge and ask that you call our office at your own convenience to arrange for our engineer to visit. Your payment will be collected by direct debit and your system is then covered regardless of whether our engineer has attended or not. You will then receive an automated weekly reminder until our engineer has attended. Your system is covered if you need to call us out of course but my office staff can concentrate on the other tasks that are required when looking after thousands of customers.

We are very happy to have you as a customer and we will always do our best to accommodate your needs and keep your most precious things secure.

Mark Rowe. For and on behalf of Rotec Alarms Ltd.