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## **The Deterrent Effect of Home Burglar Alarm Systems on Crime and Criminal Behavior**

As the 1976 *National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals* report notes, one massive resource, the private security industry, has not been tapped by governments in the fight against crime. It has offered a potential for coping with crime unlike any other. The industry's provision of goods and services to facilitate all types of crime control activities is quite substantial. Despite the substantial size of the private security industry, the effects of these private adaptations in crime prevention have not been carefully evaluated. Few scientifically driven investigations have examined the effectiveness of crime control and prevention by private security entrepreneurs in general. In particular, the deterrent effect of burglar alarm systems and their impact on crime in residential areas has not been adequately researched. With this in mind, this study will carefully examine the deterrent effect of the household burglar alarm system on crime in depth. Prior research regarding the deterrent effect of the household burglar alarm systems noted that alarms deterred burglars. Homes without an alarm were nearly three times as likely to be burgled. But it does not give detailed, in depth information. An effective strategy of investigation with clear goals is required.

Secondary data drawn from police investigative reports of burglary will be the primary source of data for the project and be divided into two sets of crime data, one for an alarm-installed house and one for a non-alarmed house. The two sets of crime data, then, will be compared to study the deterrent effect of alarm systems. Various statistical analyses and crime mapping techniques will be utilized to examine the characteristics and pattern of burglaries and the spatial displacement of crime and diffusion of benefits. This research is being supervised and guided by Dr. Ronald Clarke, Dr. Marcus Felson, and Dr. George Kelling from the School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers-Newark University under a grant and support from the Alarm Industry Research and Educational Foundation (ARIEF), the research arm of the National Burglar and Fire Alarm Association (NBFAA).