



Enlightening experience

The remainder of the luminaires were finally installed this week for downtown Farmington's pedestrian lighting project. The lighting is part of a \$1.4 million project being coordinated through the Downtown Development Authority. The first phase will be completed this fall when trees are planted along downtown streets. Sidewalk replacement and installation of paving brick was also part of the first phase. The workman is Lyle Hycinto.

Man charged in assault

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are charged with beating Walters in the parking lot of Taco Bell after an argument moments before as the three men ordered food inside the restaurant.

Walters' nose was broken and his face was cut, police said.

IN THE LATEST incident, Dober and Michael Bender, 21, of Livonia

User error is biggest cause of false alarms

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Hills, said by far most alarms activated without an intruder are caused by user error.

The greatest problem is with the new alarm owner.

A majority of the residential alarms today are digital and require the owner to punch in digital codes to set the alarms. Too often, however, the new owner panics if the alarm is accidentally activated and fails to properly disengage it, Huffstutter said.

"I've never encountered a situation where a client enters the right code, and it doesn't work," he said.

WITH TODAY'S sophisticated digital alarms, Huffstutter said, there isn't much maintenance to be performed. But alarm companies advise changing the four-digit codes every six months to prevent static electricity.

Reputable, licensed alarm compa-

nies provide users with an operations manual that must be read, understood and followed, Huffstutter said.

It is with the older, mechanical types of alarms, primarily used in commercial buildings, where more maintenance is required. Alarms that feature window bugs or foils sometimes will activate without an intruder because of warping and old age, for example, Huffstutter said.

Many users don't take the time to replace their 20-year-old systems because of costs, he added.

Beefed-up Farmington Hills alarm regulations require registration, including the listing of three contact names should the alarm activate. That way the alarm company that receives the alarm — and later calls police — can contact those who might know whether the alarm is false or who can deactivate the alarm.

"Most alarm companies won't

come and shut it off," Murphy said.

Huffstutter said users often are panicked when they call the alarm company after accidentally activating the alarm and neglect to provide the alarm company with the correct client identification code required to prevent a call to the police department.

More often than not, "the client most sadly does nothing," Huffstutter said, adding that many users don't call the alarm company to inform them of an accidental alarm.

POLICE ALSO urge users to investigate the type of alarm to be purchased as well as the company selling and installing the alarms.

"The alarm industry itself is trying to weed out the disreputable companies that are selling junk," Murphy said.

Huffstutter said the alarm industry has become more sophisticated and licensing requirements are becoming tougher.

Drive-in on Grand River is closing

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Though site plans in the city's B-3 business district don't require planning commission approval, commissioners recently reviewed the plan and "acknowledged it," Gardiner said. "They (planning commissioners) were reluctant to initiate rezoning."

SOME RESIDENTS in the area have expressed concern about the congested roads around the drive-in. But Gardiner said he's received no formal complaints from residents about the Goldbergs' plans.

"I've had more people who were anxious to get rid of the drive-in," Gardiner said.

The Goldbergs also have filed a traffic impact statement with their shopping center site plan.

They plan to construct additional lanes on Grand River for in-and-out traffic and a turn-around near Freedom Road and M-102. A passing lane also will be added on Nise Mile, said Farmington Hills traffic engineer Kevin McCarthy.

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tacted if the alarm is activated. A \$15 registration fee will be charged for new alarms.

"The fines and fees are not such that the city makes a profit off them. They barely cover the cost of responding to the false alarms," Murphy said.

Audible alarms are required to have automatic shut-off devices to deactivate the alarm within 10 seconds. This provision will not apply to fire alarms, of which there are few in the city, Murphy said.

The ordinance prohibits automatic dialing devices that connect the alarm directly with the police or fire departments.

Violations of the provisions covering fines, registration requirements and automatic shut-off devices are considered a civil infraction punishable with a maximum \$100 fine.

The ordinance also requires that alarm installers be licensed by the state.

It also prohibits alarm installers from misrepresenting the services provided to an alarm user. Violations of these provisions are considered a misdemeanor carrying a maximum fine of \$500.

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