



Fog security in a private home. The fog cannon to the upper right was installed by Per Kilsmark Rasmussen of the VS Automatic alarm company.

Slow response times make fog a popular choice for home security

Denmark is experiencing a massive increase in break-ins – and private homes have by no means been spared. As a result, more and more Danes are securing their homes with electronic alarms. Unfortunately, electronic alarms usually give the thief plenty of time to abscond with the valuables by the time the police arrive. Many homeowners have found the solution in fog cannons.

Increase in Burglaries in Private Homes

Danish crime statistics make for grim reading: In the fourth quarter of 2009, there were 16,228 break ins at private homes and apartments, amounting to a 16% increase on the same period a year before and a 34% increase on the fourth quarter of 2007.

Unpleasant though this development may be, it is hardly surprising. Criminals seek out the weakest prey – and the recent increase in security for banks, money transport vehicles, offices, petrol stations, and retail stores means that private homes often represent the easiest targets. Additionally, the past years have seen more and more Danes purchasing designer furniture and lamps, flatscreen TVs, and other easily transportable, high-value items that can be sold on to black-market dealers.

“We're hearing from alarm installers across the country that they're doing an increasing amount of work in private homes. Because a lot of folks are uneasy both when they're home and when they're away, they have alarms installed so they can secure the parts of the house in which they aren't sleeping as well as secure their entire house while they're out”, explains Poul Dalsgaard, CEO of Protect, which specialises in fog security.

Individuals are supplementing traditional electronic alarms with fog cannons in selected spots in the house. These are positioned so that they fill the house with a dense fog if a window or door is opened or if anyone is moving about the rooms. When the family is at home, the room monitoring system is turned off so people can move around freely, and the alarm is only activated if an outer door or window is opened.

Some people choose visible fog cannons while others choose to hide the fog cannons behind walls or above lowered ceilings so that only the small nozzle opening is visible.

The Police Don't Attend the Scene

A family in the suburbs of Århus, Denmark's second-largest city, have suffered multiple burglaries, in which the thieves have gotten away with designer furniture and lamps. An electronic alarm had been installed, but the family found that the guards did not make it to the house before the thieves had escaped with their ill-gotten gains.

“Last year, while we were on holiday, the neighbours noticed activity inside and outside the house. They went over to check that everything was OK, and they saw four thieves leaving the house carrying our two Arne Jakobsen 'Egg' chairs on their heads”, K says.

The neighbours called the police and told them about the four thieves, the car they were driving, and the direction in which they had gone. They also informed the police that the house's electronic burglar alarm had been activated and that this meant that guards were already on their way. The duty officer at the police station contacted emergency services and was informed that the police would not be attending the scene since the security guards would be coming anyway.

The uninvited guests made another visit after Christmas. K and his family had friends over and were celebrating until around three in the morning. However, when K awoke the next day, he noticed fresh footprints around the house, going right up to the windows.

“It made us feel so unsafe knowing that there'd been people outside, waiting for us to go to bed. The worst type of burglary is when you're at home. That's why we decided to have fog security installed”, K explains.

Since getting the fog system installed, the family home has been safe from break-ins.

Nice Seeing a Video of the Break In, But Better Preventing It in the First Place

J and his wife live together in a beautifully restored old house in central Denmark. The house is somewhat isolated, a bit off the local road that itself carries only the lightest of traffic.

“On the advice of our alarm installers VS Automatic, we chose to secure the house with an electronic alarm. We opted not to invest in video monitoring though. We don't really need to see a recording of a burglary; we'd rather avoid having a break in altogether”, J explains. Despite their efforts, the family was visited by intruders who stole all they could lay their hands on before the guards arrived.

Alarm centres usually guarantee a response time of between 20 and 30 minutes. In that space of time, the thieves at J's house managed to steal all of the family's remote controls and caused a great deal of vandalism as well.

“We just want to be left in peace and quiet. After that unpleasant experience, we boosted our intruder alarm by adding fog cannons, fire alarms, and smoke alarms. An attack alarm too. And all we can do is hope that we never have to use it.”

J still likes the idea of guards locking up the house and securing the area after a break in. In houses with fog cannons, the guards also air out the rooms in which the cannons have been activated.

For J, fog cannons are the most secure type of alarm. Since they were installed, the family has had no break-ins.

Taking the Valuables to Work

L and her family live in northern Denmark and had fog security installed after a series of burglaries in the area. She first learned about fog security at her workplace, which is fitted with fog cannons. The security system made a positive impression, so she contacted Almsten Sikring, which advised her on the technology and took care of the installation.

L works in the healthcare sector and is fearful that this will make her home particularly enticing for burglars. The family has experienced break ins in their previous house as well as their summerhouse, neither of which had alarms. After a number of break-ins in the area, they were determined to improve the security at their new home.

“We've toiled all our lives for this, so of course we'd be sad to lose the nice things we've bought. That's why I began taking jewellery and other valuables with me when I left home for work. After having had fog security installed, I can leave it at home with peace of mind”, L concludes.

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