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OU Police Department partners with local agencies

By **Dawn Pauli**, contributing writer

In addition to making sure Oakland University's campus is safe, the **OU Police Department** is continually training to ensure it's prepared for any type of emergency situation.

"Our intent is to make us better able to respond to any potential crisis that may occur," said Samuel Lucido, director of police and public safety. "This is becoming more common at various institutions that may not have thought of these things in depth before. We did a thorough update of our emergency response plan and enhanced the training of OU's officers."

OU's Police Department, with 20 sworn officers on staff, also is partnering with other local fire and police departments to train together, so the agencies will be prepared to work together if ever necessary.

"We've been working with Chief Lucido and the OU Police Department for upwards of two years, and we've established a close relationship and have assisted them and received assistance from them in establishing mutual agreements and response capabilities," said Michael Sturm, administrator for Oakland County Emergency Response and Preparedness. "We are in the top percentiles in terms of readiness, response capability and training."

OU, along with Oakland County and other agencies, focus on communication and coordination.

"One of the most important things in managing any type of crisis is close coordination and communication between all agencies," Sturm said. "Chief Lucido is very proactive in these areas. That does nothing but enhance the security posture of the entire university."

With the support of state homeland security funding, a tabletop emergency preparedness exercise was conducted this summer. Facilitated by the Oakland County Emergency Preparedness Division, OU's crisis management team, under the direction of OU President Gary Russi, participated in a mock emergency scenario.

A series of problems was given to the team, testing their decision-making ability. The facilitator kept adding issues to see how the team responded.

"Team members performed exceptionally well under the somewhat stressful conditions and, quite frankly, they exceeded my initial expectations for our first tabletop exercise," Lucido said. "Primarily, I think the exercise helped reinforce points we had addressed in our earlier meetings and discussions, that planning and preparation ahead of time are the keys to effective decision making during the emergency management process."

Local businesses can learn more about emergency preparedness at a seminar hosted by OU's **School of Business Administration** on Friday, Dec. 10. "Emergency Preparedness for the Business Community" will inform businesses and employers in the local community about emergency response activities as well as help them improve their programs for personal safety and business preservation.

Representatives from the Emergency Preparedness and Response teams in the community, including Sturm, will provide a day filled with interactive sessions. The cost per person is \$195.

For more information on the seminar, visit the School of Business Administration's **Center for Continuing Education** Web site or call (248) 370-3128.

SUMMARY

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