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Campus community encouraged to register for text messaging alerts

By **Dave Groves**, news editor

The start of the winter 2009 semester at Oakland University brings with it an opportunity for new students, faculty and staff, as well as returning members of the university community, to make sure they'll be among the first to know if and when a crisis situation occurs on campus.

Last year, the Oakland University Police Department launched a text messaging alert system that can be used to rapidly inform users via cell phone of an unfolding emergency. Outside of system tests conducted once each semester, alerts are broadcast only when it is determined that there is an imminent threat to the health, safety or welfare of people on campus.

All registered students and active employees who haven't already registered for the free service are strongly encouraged to do so. Only individuals who subscribe will receive text alerts, and voice alerts are available for those without text messaging capability.

Officials have planned to conduct the winter 2009 semester system test at about 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 10. Registering prior to this test will allow users not only to learn more about the service, but to see firsthand how valuable a communications tool it is.

Police Chief Samuel Lucido is among university officials who invite students, faculty and staff with an OU e-mail address and Grizzly ID to take just a few minutes to do so at OU's Emergency Preparedness Web site, www.oakland.edu/ready.

"Oakland University has long had comprehensive plans in place to notify people on campus of emergency situations," Lucido explained. "The text message alert system takes us to the next level. It takes advantage of new technology that allows us to make our communication plans even more effective."

In addition to text messaging alert system, the OUPD is now capable of receiving text message tips and reports. They can be sent to the OUPD dispatcher at 911@oakland.edu. E-mail messages can be sent to the same address.

Further information about the text message alert system, as well as the university's comprehensive emergency preparedness procedures, is available at the [Emergency Preparedness Web site](#).

SUMMARY

A new semester brings an opportunity for students, faculty and staff to make sure they'll be among the first to know if and when a crisis situation occurs on campus.

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