

Wednesday, December 16, 2009

New OUPD loudspeaker provides on-campus communication

By **Dave Groves**, staff writer

Though Oakland University already has a multifaceted emergency communications system in place, the Oakland University Police Department is continuing work to ensure that the system is as comprehensive as possible.

A recent enhancement involves the installation of an outdoor public address system, which can be used to broadcast urgent, real-time information to anyone making their way between buildings or to parking lots.

Police Chief Samuel Lucido said the loudspeaker system will be used primarily for emergencies, so listeners should be aware that most messages they hear on the system are both urgent and critical to the health and safety of the campus community.

"We're cognizant of the fact that in various emergency situations, not every communication method we have in place will immediately reach every person on campus," Lucido said. "The most effective way to address this is to put as many different methods in place as possible. We're pleased to have this new capability to add to our already robust notification system."

The public address system may not be used in all emergency situations, but will be used any time there is imminent danger to people on campus and for any other situations deemed appropriate. The chief also noted that periodic test messages will be broadcast over the system, and the fact that they are part of a test will be made abundantly clear.

The public address system works in tandem with emergency phones located throughout campus. Blue lights on the phones will flash when messages are broadcast over strategically located loudspeakers.

Lucido said police personnel also will be able to use the system in conjunction with the university's security camera network, as broadcast messages can be tailored to respond to situations or circumstances that police observe via the campuswide surveillance system.

Other emergency communication methods in place include Web article postings at oakland.edu, text message alerts sent to registered cell phone numbers, broadcast e-mail sent to all student, faculty and staff OU addresses, broadcast voicemail sent to all campus phones, notification of the campus operator, notification of area television and radio stations, loudspeaker announcements from police patrol cars, flyer postings and word of mouth dissemination.

Lucido stressed that while technology continues to enhance police response capabilities in emergency situations, the most effective asset police can rely on is a well-informed public. As such, the chief encourages all in the campus community to visit oakland.edu/prepared to learn more about emergency procedures, safety tips and crisis prevention measures.

Lucido also encourages all on campus to register for the free emergency text message alert system by visiting oakland.edu/ready. In addition to sending text message alerts during emergency situations, the OUPD is capable of receiving them from anyone unable to call or uncomfortable with the idea of calling dispatchers directly.

To reach the OUPD in the event of an emergency:

- Call 911 from any campus phone
- Call (248) 370-3333 from any cell phone
- Text the dispatch office at 911@oakland.edu
- E-mail the dispatch office at 911@oakland.edu

SUMMARY

The OU Police Department has installed an outdoor loudspeaker system, which can be used to broadcast urgent, real-time information in an emergency situation.

Created by Katherine Land - Deleted (land@oakland.edu) on Wednesday, December 16, 2009
Modified by Katherine Land - Deleted (land@oakland.edu) on Wednesday, December 16, 2009
Article Start Date: Wednesday, December 16, 2009