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OUPD looks to boost emergency text alert registration

By **Dave Groves**, news editor

The Oakland University Police Department (OUPD) is encouraging those in the campus community who haven't yet signed up for emergency text message alerts to learn more about this convenient and immensely valuable communications tool.

The technology allows police to instantly notify any of the university's 22,000 students, staff and faculty of a crisis situation via their cell phones. This is particularly beneficial when a person does not have immediate access to a desk phone or the Internet.

Police Chief Samuel Lucido hopes that as more people learn about the advantages of this free and non-intrusive service, they'll take just a few minutes to register at OU's Emergency Preparedness Web site, www.oakland.edu/ready.

"We want to keep the university community informed in the event of a serious emergency or threat to safety, and this is just a great way to do it," he said.

Any registered student or active employee with an OU e-mail address and Grizzly ID can sign up, and only individuals who subscribe will receive text alerts. Voice alerts are available for those without text messaging capability.

Since the system was brought on line in August, police have issued both a test alert and an actual alert relative to a vague threat discovered on campus. The threat proved to be unfounded.

Lucido said that in both cases, the technology demonstrated just how effective it is as an emergency communications tool. "It was really successful in terms of getting the information out quickly, so we know it works," he said.

Test alerts are issued just once per semester, and actual alerts will be issued only when it is determined that there is an imminent threat to the health, safety or welfare of people on campus.

"That's all it is – a tool we'll use to help keep you safe and secure," Lucido explained. "That's all it's ever going to be used for."

Further information about the text message alert system, as well as the university's comprehensive emergency preparedness plan, is available at the **Emergency Preparedness** Web site.

SUMMARY

Those who haven't yet signed up for emergency text message alerts are encouraged to learn more about this valuable communications tool.

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