



# ***READINESS RULES***

**“Readiness Saves Lives”**

<http://www.osep.uga.edu>

Office of Security & Emergency Preparedness Bulletin

May 2007

## **Featured Article scheduled for this issue has been rescheduled for a later issue.**

In light of the tragic events on the Virginia Tech campus on April 16, 2007, the May version of *Readiness Rules* will focus on emergency response and notification rather than the intended featured article, “The Role of UGA Building Safety and Security Representatives.” This topic will be addressed in a subsequent issue. In the interim, readers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Building Safety and Security Representatives policy available at <http://askuga.uga.edu/default.asp?id=1316&Lang=1&SID=>

## Featured Article

### **UGA Emergency Response and Notification**

The University of Georgia (UGA) is a large, diverse and dispersed organization. The University is a microcosm of society in general and consequently experiences many of the same risks and security challenges.

A number of departments at the University of Georgia share responsibility for emergency management and response. The primary response agencies are the University Police Department, Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness,

and Environmental Safety Division (which includes Fire, Lab, and Radiation Safety; Hazardous Materials Management and Environmental Health). Additionally, several UGA specialized teams are available to respond to many unique types of emergencies. Examples include the Hazard Assessment Response Team (HART), Bomb Disposal Team, Special Response Team (SWAT), Hostage Negotiation Team, and Crowd Control Team. Because the University of Georgia is situated in Athens-Clarke County (ACC), UGA and ACC emergency management personnel routinely plan, train and exercise together to ensure a consolidated local response when needed. Other campus units that provide unique expertise in assisting with responses include the Office of Information Security, University Health Services, Biosafety Office and a statewide Agrosecurity Response Team, among others.

Following the tragic incident at Virginia Tech, the above named departments began reviewing their procedures and response protocols to see what—if any—changes should be made based on the limited information available at the time. That review is ongoing. Additionally, President Adams announced the formation of two special committees. The first will examine UGA’s police and emergency measures and the other will review policies regarding the identification and treatment of those persons within the UGA community who may be negotiating some psychological issues that could affect their judgment or result in harming themselves or others. These committees will present their reports to President Adams by September 1.

There has been a substantial focus on the Virginia Tech incident time frame and procedures to notify faculty, staff and students of a campus emergency. Certainly, it is too early to critique this incident

without having the facts together or without speaking with the public safety responders and the administrative personnel on the Virginia Tech campus, but the issue of emergency notification is critical on every higher education campus nonetheless.

Redundancy is important because at any given time, one or more of the communication methods may fail. Currently UGA communicates with students, faculty, and staff during emergencies in the following ways:

- Outdoor emergency sirens (primarily for weather related events)
- Emergency pagers located in certain campus buildings
- Campus-wide email system (able to send messages to approximately 50,000 individuals in 20 minutes to one hour)
- AM radio station maintained by the UGA Police Department
- NOAA weather radios located in many UGA departments
- Telephone trees (where assigned individuals call others with emergency messages)
- UGA-specific crawler messages on all TVs subscribed to the University Cablevision (including offices and residence halls)
- UGAAlert, the emergency notification system currently being tested



The UGA Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness (OSEP), the University of Georgia Police Department (UGA PD), the UGA Public Affairs Office, and Enterprise Information Technology Service (EITS) recognized a gap in emergency notification over a year ago and have been researching and identifying potential campus emergency notification systems to fill this gap. Under a Board of Regents System-wide contract negotiated by UGA, in December 2006, OSEP purchased 5,000 test accounts for a mass notification system that is capable of sending thousands of messages in minutes to registered cell

phones, land lines and email addresses. The UGA emergency notification system is called UGAAlert and is currently under evaluation by the implementation team—OSEP, UGA PD, EITS and Public Affairs. Selected campus groups have been invited to participate in the testing phase. The UGA Emergency Response Team (ERT) is also included in this test group, along with those who currently possess and monitor the UGA PD emergency pagers.

Over the past three months, EITS has been developing an interface to allow the UGA community to register, change or delete personal contact information using their UGA MyID. The UGAAlert system should be available to the campus community before the start of the fall semester.

More information about the UGA emergency notification initiative will be provided as the project moves from the testing phase into the operational stage.

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## Upcoming Events

### Emergency Preparedness Class

May 21, 2007, 1:30-3:30 pm  
 Training & Development Center  
 Classes are open to all faculty and staff.  
 Registration information:  
<http://www.busfin.uga.edu/staff/>

### Auxiliary & Administrative Services Showcase

May 23, 2007, 2:00–4:00 pm  
 East Village Commons  
 Open to the campus community



Upcoming Issue: The Role of Building Safety and Security Representatives

Bulletins are available bimonthly. The issues assist in disseminating current security preparedness information from this office and other University units. Sign up to receive issues of *Readiness Rules* by e-mail. Click on “bulletin by e-mail” located on the [home / contact us](#) bar on the OSEP Web site <http://www.osep.uga.edu>.