



# **READINESS RULES**

**“Readiness Saves Lives”**

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

Office of Security & Emergency Preparedness Bulletin

September 2007

## Featured Article

### **September is National Preparedness Month**

“National Preparedness Month is a nationwide effort held each September to encourage Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses and schools. National Preparedness Month 2007 is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The goal of the month is to increase public awareness about the importance of preparing for emergencies and to encourage individuals to take action. Throughout September, Homeland Security will work with a wide variety of organizations, including local, state and federal government agencies and the private sector, to highlight the importance of family emergency preparedness and promote individual involvement through events and activities across the nation.” (Referenced from the Web site [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).)

The UGA Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness (OSEP) is a National Preparedness Month 2007 Coalition Member. During September, OSEP will focus attention on steps students, faculty, and staff can take to better prepare for emergencies. In addition to a display at the East Village Commons, OSEP will promote awareness through banners, flyers, and bus placards with a special emphasis on encouraging registration in *UGAAlert*, UGA’s newest emergency notification system.

***President George W. Bush and Georgia Governor, Sonny Perdue, proclaim September as National Preparedness Month.***

***Read proclamations at [www.osep.uga.edu](http://www.osep.uga.edu).***

### **What Can I Do to Prepare for Emergencies?**

Individual preparedness is the cornerstone of emergency preparedness and response. National Preparedness month is a good time to begin planning for emergencies that may impact you. The campus community is encouraged to take the following steps:

- **Get a Kit** – Assemble a kit that contains enough emergency supplies to allow you to survive for at least three days in the event an emergency happens. The kit should include basic items like water, food, a wind-up or battery powered radio and flashlight (with fresh batteries), and a first aid kit. Visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) for a detailed listing of kit items.
- **Make a Plan** – Plan in advance what you will do in an emergency. Your plan should include a communications plan with family members and should address sheltering-in-place and evacuation situations. Preplan several evacuation routes.
- **Be Informed** – Learn more about the different kinds of threats that could affect your community and appropriate responses to them.
- **Learn More** – Go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) and [www.redcross.org/preparedness](http://www.redcross.org/preparedness) for a complete list of recommended supplies for your disaster kit and for templates to help get you started on a communications plan. You will also find information about natural disasters and potential terrorist threats including biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological emergencies.
- **Get Involved** – After preparing yourself for possible emergencies, take the next step: get training in first aid, CPR, and emergency response and get involved in preparing your community. Explore these opportunities:

• **American Red Cross** <http://www.redcross.org/>  
The American Red Cross helps people in emergencies every day. Whether its half a million disaster victims or one sick child who needs blood.



*Remember September 11, 2001*

• **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** <https://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/>  
The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

• **Medical Reserve Corp (MRC)**  
<http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/HomePage>

The mission of the Medical Reserve Corps is to improve the health and safety of communities across the country by organizing and utilizing public health, medical and other volunteers.

MRC was founded after President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address, in which he asked all Americans to volunteer in support of their country. It is a partner program with [Citizen Corps](#), a national network of volunteers dedicated to ensuring hometown security. Citizen Corps, along with AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Peace Corps are part of the President's [USA Freedom Corps](#), which promotes volunteerism and service nationwide.

• **Volunteer UGA**  
<http://www.uga.edu/cls/vuga/vugaprograms.htm>  
Volunteer UGA was formed in 2004 as the campus volunteer center for the University of Georgia. Volunteer UGA is designed to connect UGA students with the many opportunities for community service in the Athens-Clarke County community and throughout the region.

## UGA Alert

Emergency Notification System

<http://ugaalert.uga.edu/>

Although college campuses are usually safe places, emergencies and disasters do occur. UGA is committed to keeping you as safe as possible through effective communication prior to, during, and following emergencies. *UGAAlert* allows you to receive emergency messages on multiple devices. You may identify as many as three phone numbers and two email addresses for receiving emergency notifications. To register, you must have a valid [UGA MyID](#).

- [Proceed to registration](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- Access information regarding any current emergencies

*Note: A full-scale test of the system will be conducted in late September.*

### Committees Issue Recommendations About Campus Safety

By Larry B. Dendy

(Reprinted from UGA Columns, September 10, 2007 issue)

Two committees that spent the past four months studying emergency preparedness at UGA have issued lengthy lists of recommendations for ways the university can better prevent, or respond to, incidents that threaten campus safety.

The recommendations span a wide array of issues and concerns and include installing Enhanced 911

and Reverse 911 services in the university telephone system; mandatory participation in the new UGAAlert system; formation of a permanent team to coordinate mental health services and resources; and training to help key personnel recognize serious behavioral problems.

UGA President Michael F. Adams appointed the committees last May in the aftermath of the April shootings at Virginia Tech.

One committee, chaired by Kathy Pharr, assistant vice president for finance and administration, focused on steps the university can take to better prepare for emergencies and improve communications in a crisis situation.



The other committee, chaired by Lonnie Brown, associate professor of law, examined psychological services the university provides to deal with problems related to mental health.



Both committees not only studied existing procedures and protocols at UGA, but also interviewed experts, conducted literature searches and collected relevant information from other universities. The committees presented their findings in detailed reports running more than 60 pages in length that together contain 38 recommendations.

The committees' work is part of UGA's participation in an effort by the University System of Georgia to develop a plan for handling emergencies that will apply to all schools in the system. Each committee emphasized that safety is a paramount concern on campuses and that universities have no choice but to take aggressive measures to protect students, employees and visitors.

The committee on psychological services acknowledged that "mental illness and violent behavior are by no means inextricably linked." But the committee warned that "mental health issues are of major concern today, particularly on university campuses. . . (and) when combined with the current

heightened anxiety about students exhibiting general behavioral concerns, the subject has taken on increased importance for educational institutions."

Key recommendations from the committee on preparedness and communications include adding Enhanced 911 and Reverse 911 services to the university telephone system; mandating participation of students and employees in the UGAAlert mass notification system; boosting university police salaries to improve retention of well-trained first responders; designating a 24/7 safety representative for every campus building; and installing public address systems in some buildings.

The psychological services committee recommendations include creating a Behavioral Assessment and Response Council to coordinate mental health-related services and resources; specially training at least two employees in every unit to be the principal "go to" persons for identifying and responding to individual behavioral concerns; increasing the number of licensed psychologists and support staff in Counseling and Psychiatric Services; providing special counseling services for ethnic minority, international and other "underrepresented" students; and changing laws governing disclosure of student mental health records.

Both committees recognize that some recommendations can't be implemented without additional funds, and that many recommendations will require further planning. But they urge the university to keep safety and emergency prevention and response a top priority.

Footnote: The complete report is posted on the OSEP Web site [www.osep.uga.edu](http://www.osep.uga.edu). As UGA President Michael F. Adams' response becomes available, it will be posted on the OSEP Web site.



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