

Campus Safety and Security

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From: David Rainer, Associate Vice Chancellor
Environmental Health and Public Safety
Subject: Campus Safety and Security

North Carolina State University is committed to ensuring rapid response to emergencies and to communication and notification with the campus community using a variety of methods. The goal is to reach the target audience of the emergency notification/communication within a time frame commensurate with the nature of the emergency and message to be delivered.

In support of this goal and in preparation for emergencies, NC State routinely reviews and assesses emergency practices and protocols, communications channels and procedures, and conducts a variety of disaster/emergency response drills. Many units across the campus work closely with university administration to manage and communicate a crisis or emergency situation including Environmental Health and Safety, Campus Police, Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery, Human Resources, Public Affairs, Chancellor's Office, Provost's Office, Student Affairs and Transportation.

NC State's campus spans more than 2,000 acres and several hundred buildings. At any given time (and including visitors), there are as many as 40,000 people on campus. No one communications method provides the ability to immediately reach all 40,000 people. In fact, even using multiple communications methods, it is unrealistic to expect immediate notification of the entire campus in an emergency.

University staff and administration have worked tirelessly to determine how to best serve the entire University community and population, in the event of imminent threats or emergencies. The goals of NC State's Emergency Notification and Communication protocols are:

- To notify campus constituents of an imminent hazard in as short a time as practicable
- To utilize redundant systems to reach as many campus constituents as practicable
- To facilitate periodic testing of emergency communication and notification systems and response practices

To better understand the variety of campus alert tools that NC State may use, refer to the glossary below. These notification and communication tools are not intended for use in all instances, but are reserved for emergencies that present a broad, immediate and ongoing threat to campus:

WolfAlert text messaging: The University sends a message much like a text message that goes from one person to another. Most text messages will direct users to the University homepage for more information. Currently about 19,000 students and employees are signed up to receive text alerts. Based on the first test of the system, it takes about 25 minutes to reach all 19,000. Only individuals with an official University ID may sign up to receive a text message. **Strength** – It's a message that goes directly to the recipient. **Limitation** - The number of characters in a text are limited to about 140, meaning we could only use text messaging as a general alert that would instruct recipients to go to the home page or emergency information page for more details; 25 minutes is as fast as 19,000 text messages can be delivered and in a real emergency the system might be slowed by increased cell phone activity.

WolfAlert Audible Sirens: The University has added voice and siren-enabled towers throughout campus. The towers are designed to broadcast a siren alert to signal to community members who are outside they need to seek emergency information (website, media, etc.). **Strengths** - Can alert a large area quickly. **Limitation** - Not intended for those inside buildings, acts as a signal to seek more information.

Homepage message: The University uses two spaces on the homepage for alerts. In a "major" emergency, the page would contain only emergency communications. In a minor emergency, a black block underneath the upper banner of the page would be utilized. **Strength** - Plenty of room to fully flesh out details of the incident as they become available. **Limitation**- it's dependent on people being at their computers.

Broadcast email: A broadcast email goes to everyone who has a university email account. **Strength** - Could be a more thorough explanation of the situation than would be included in a text message. **Limitation** – Like text messaging, not as fast as one individual emailing another. It could take up to two hours to deliver emails to the roughly 40,000 people who have university email accounts.

Emergency Listserv: Each building on campus has at least one building liaison and most have several. The listserv would be used to provide an email message to the network of building liaisons, which would then spread the word. **Strength** - Provides a first-person word-of-mouth warning. **Limitation** - Not as effective in a building directly involved in the emergency.

Campus hotline: The University uses (919) 513-8888 for a wide range of announcements, including adverse weather and emergency situations. **Strength** - Easily updated. **Limitation** - Could be overloaded by callers seeking information in an emergency.

Campus and external media: Radio Station WKNC-FM (88.1), the Technician (Technicianonline.com), Nubian Message (ncsu.edu/numbian) and campus cable as well as the Raleigh print and broadcast media likely would cover or include information about emergencies on campus. **Strength** - Easily accessible. **Limitation** - Might not be as accurate or up-to-date as sources maintained by the university.

Crime alerts: Used by Campus Police to send information to campus and seek assistance from the campus in situations involving a localized crime. These alerts are sent to everyone who has a university email account. **Strength** - Could be a more thorough explanation of the situation than would be included in a text message. **Limitation** - Because police must ensure the accuracy of the evidence and witness and victim accounts, crime alerts may be delayed by an hour or more.

For periodic updates about campus safety initiatives, visit the University web page <http://www.ncsu.edu/emergency-information/> and view the information, *Orientation to Emergency Preparedness and Procedures*. We are committed to working with all members of the university community in continuing to make NC State a safe place to live, work and learn and personifying the mantra that safety is a shared responsibility.