

EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Required by Higher Education Opportunity Act

Overview

The Muskingum University is dedicated to providing a safe education environment for the entire campus community. The Muskingum University Police Department works closely in conjunction with the New Concord Police Department, the New Concord Fire Department, the Muskingum County Sheriff's Office, and the Muskingum County Emergency Management System in order to be prepared should a disaster situation arise on-campus.

The Muskingum University Emergency Action Plan is a guide to provide faculty, staff, and students with an emergency and crisis management system when responding to a major disaster or disturbance to the campus. All personnel designated to carry out specific responsibilities are trained to know and understand the Muskingum University policies and procedures. The Emergency Action Plan was created to meet the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standard 29.

The Emergency Action Plan is designed to effectively coordinate the use of university and community resources to protect life and property both during and immediately following a major crisis or disturbance to the campus. The plan shall be placed into operation whenever an emergency affecting the university cannot be controlled using daily operating procedures.

All faculty and staff members are informed of the Emergency Management and Evacuation Resource Guide Flip Chart upon employment and it is available for viewing at the Human Resources Office. The resource guide shows evacuation locations for each building as well as response steps to take depending on the type of emergency. Emergency evacuation route maps are also posted in each building displaying the closet exit.

Mass Notification System

The Mass Notification System utilized by the Muskingum University consists of a mass text message notification system referred to as META. META stands for the Muskingum Emergency Text Alert system and gives Muskingum University officials the ability to communicate emergency information quickly by text message capability on a cell-phone or PDA.

META is a notification system is a free service that is available to any student, faculty, or staff member who chooses to register for the service. All parents of and incoming first year students are provided with informational literature regarding the system. The META system is discussed with all first year students during open forums. All students are also notified by a popup message regarding the META system each time they access the "Muskie Link" and information about the system is also listed in the student handbook. A mass email message notification system is also in place should the need arise to inform students of an emergency or dangerous situation.

The Muskingum University will, without delay, immediately notify the campus community upon the confirmation that an emergency or dangerous situation exists that presents an immediate threat to the health or safety of students, faculty, and staff occurring on campus. The university will determine the content of the notification and initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise the efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency.

The Muskingum University Police Department and the Student Life Office will evaluate emergency situations as they occur and determine who to notify, the content of the notification, and initiate the notification system. If it is determined as necessary, the local television and radio stations will be notified to disseminate emergency information to the entire community surrounding the university.

After the initial notification, follow-up information may be disseminated once the determination has been made that additional information is necessary or the emergency no longer exists.

The notification system will be tested once a year by the Muskingum University Police Department and the Student Life Office. The test will be documented along with the description of the exercise, the date, the time, and whether the notification was announced or unannounced.

Definitions

Email and Text Messages – Brief, direct notifications received on a cellular phone, PDA, or email system sent to the direct user of the registered account.

Emergency Alerts – Notifications regarding critical incidents that pose an imminent threat to the health or safety of the Muskingum University campus. Examples of such emergency incidents include, but are not limited to severe weather (i.e., tornado, flood), hazardous materials incidents, and acts of criminal violence (i.e., active shooter, bomb threat, hostage situation) that broadly threaten the safety of the Muskingum University community.

Mass Notification System – Establishes the guidelines by which the META notification system will be used for distribution of emergency alerts to students, faculty, and staff that would be affected directly by a critical incident which poses an imminent threat to their health or safety given their presence on the campus and/ or surrounding areas.

META – Refers to the Muskingum Emergency Text Alert system and gives Muskingum University officials the ability to communicate emergency information quickly by text message capability on a cell-phone or PDA. This notification system is a free service that is available to any student, faculty, or staff member who chooses to register for the service.