Emergency Communication and Control Solutions

REI is a local provider of solutions that address the needs of today’s campus environments. As a part of our dedication to provide relevant information with regard to Campus Safety we offer the information below from Campus Safety magazine. Additions are made to this list that show the continual focus on this area by industry experts.

**MASS NOTIFICATION**

27 Emergency Notification Best Practices

Conducting a risk analysis, sharing resources, creating clear, concise messages and more can help your campus send emergency alerts.

By Robin Hattersley Gray | August 07, 2012 | Comments (0) | Post a comment

For several years now, Campus Safety magazine has been adding to our list of best practices recommended by the campus protection professionals, emergency notification equipment manufacturers and other subject matter experts we’ve interviewed. Below is our latest compilation.

Please note that although these best practices are numbered, the creation of an effective mass notification program is not a linear process. These recommendations should be considered as a whole when adopting new or upgraded equipment, revising emergency notification plans and updating policies and procedures.

1. Conduct a risk analysis for your overall emergency plan

2. Involve your campus IT department

3. Share resources and work with other stakeholders, including neighbors, county, city, churches, local businesses, etc.

4. Use several technologies; no one method of communication will reach everyone

5. Conduct site assessments for each technology deployed

6. Determine ahead of time who has the authority to issue alerts

7. Messages should originate from a trusted campus authority

8. Determine ahead of time the situations when you will activate your emergency notification system

9. Create clear, concise audible and written messages by working with campus public relations

10. Use and test the system often but not too often

11. Create groups of first responders and decision makers who can receive messages more frequently

12. Automate your SMS text alert database

13. Incorporate adequate logical security measures to protect your SMS alert database

14. Avoid spam filters by white listing (Note: most reputable vendors automatically do this)

15. Market your mass notification program, and educate the campus community on how the system is used, what to expect and what to do during an emergency

16. Adopt the opt-out approach to text alert enrollment (or make enrollment mandatory)

17. Manage the message when the media are involved by having a good crisis communications plan in place

18. Work with international student groups so they will receive and understand emergency messages during a crisis

19. Include visitors and transient public in your emergency notification plans

20. Choose the delivery methods most appropriate for the situation. Don’t use the all-or-nothing approach to issuing alerts.

21. Adopt technologies, policies and procedures that will enable effective communication with the hearing- and sight-impaired

22. Mark your storm shelters

23. Make tests realistic and conduct them at busy times

24. Regularly train staff on how to issue alerts

25. Adopt a change-management procedure so that everything is documented and everyone knows about system changes/improvements

26. For campuses that have undergone major construction or renovation, verify your existing mass notification systems (sirens, loudspeakers, SMS text alert systems, etc.) still provide appropriate coverage

27. Determine how your campus will communicate with parents during and after an emergency

As you think about your campus emergency solutions, think of REI. We are here to work with you to develop appropriate solutions for your campus requirements.

Give us a call, or send a note to have a discussion at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Keith Goethner

203-794-2690

keith@reitechnology.com