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## UNH Begins Audible Testing Of Campus Emergency Notification System

Erika Mantz  
*UNH Media Relations*

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## UNH Begins Audible Testing Of Campus Emergency Notification System

Contact: [Erika Mantz](#)  
603-862-1567  
UNH Media Relations

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DURHAM, N.H. – A mass notification system donated by a University of New Hampshire alumnus a week after the Virginia Tech tragedy is installed and ready to be tested.

Testing will begin Monday, July 23, 2007, at 12:30 p.m. and will continue throughout the year on a regular basis. The test will include the siren, a “canned” message and a recording signaling the end of the test. The entire exercise will take less than 10 minutes.

Engineers and UNH staff spent the week prior to Commencement installing the mass alert system given to the university by John Olson, president and CEO of Whelen Engineering and UNH Class of '57.

The system is designed to not only alert the campus community when there is imminent danger but also follows up with voice instructions, according to Brad Manning, director of environmental health and safety. This two-step approach, called Alert and Inform, helps reduce confusion and restore order.

The four siren locations are the roof of the Memorial Union Building, the roof of Morse Hall, A-Lot and the dirt parking lot near the equestrian facility. The system reaches a distance of nearly a mile in all directions. UNH officials have talked with community leaders in Durham, Lee and Madbury about the system and the regular testing that will occur. Residents within the affected area have been notified of the testing schedule.

There also are plans to roll out a comprehensive educational program so that everyone on campus and in Durham understands the system and what it means when they hear it.

The Whelen mass notification system has been installed worldwide in academic institutions as well as the public and private sectors. Whelen Engineering built its first notification system in the mid-1970s, used primarily by communities in the Midwest to alert residents to natural disasters, especially tornadoes. By 1980, in the aftermath of Three-Mile Island, his system was required of all nuclear power plants in the country. The country of Denmark purchased the system and there are 1,244 sites throughout that country, all controlled from one location.

Contact Paul Dean, UNH's coordinator for emergency preparedness, at (603) 862-1427 for more information or with any questions.



