

# Synopsis of Emergency Operations Plan Communications and Alert Mechanisms

## Emergency Communications System

The Emergency Communications System on campus is the first point of information dissemination to the campus community. The system, comprised of emergency sirens placed throughout the campus, will be activated in the event of a campus emergency, such as a weather emergency, ongoing crime activity where there is an imminent threat to personal safety and security, a hazardous materials accident, or other critical incidents that impact the safety and security at the UMBC campus.

When the siren sounds on campus, the first course of action should be to seek shelter in the nearest building. In addition to the siren, the system has the capability to broadcast amplified verbal instructions, and community members should listen for these broadcast instructions as they make their way to the safety of a campus building. Once inside the safe areas of campus buildings, community members should seek additional information by visiting the campus website, [www.umbc.edu](http://www.umbc.edu), [my.umbc.edu](http://my.umbc.edu), and utilizing the UMBC Announcement Line, available at 410-455-6789. Everyone should add the UMBC Announcement Line as a contact in their cell phone, as this service will provide the timeliest information regarding an early developing critical incident.

## E2Campus Emergency Text Alert System

UMBC has purchased a state of the art text alert system called E2Campus. The system allows the rapid dissemination of information to the campus community in the event of an emergency through all text enabled devices such as cell phones, PDAs, and email. This system provides the easiest and quickest method to reach large numbers of the campus community, and has the capacity to distribute a short text message detailing critical information to the whole campus community within 10 minutes. While it is a robust and effective means of communication, the system is dependent upon members of the campus community to sign up for the free service. All members of the campus community are encouraged to sign up for E2Campus by going to the [my.umbc.edu](http://my.umbc.edu) webpage and click on the “alerts” button on the top right of the page, or by going to the UMBC Police website, [www.umbc.edu/police](http://www.umbc.edu/police), and clicking on the **Emergency Notifications “log in” button** on the UMBC Police website Homepage . Once enrolled, the subscriber will receive E2Campus emergency notifications to any text enabled device they register.

## WeatherData

UMBC subscribes to WeatherData, a state of the art weather information and monitoring system which delivers the best available weather information in real time. As a site specific weather monitoring and analysis service, data is compiled from sources such as the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), National Weather Service (NWS) and the National Lightning Detection Network. UMBC receives real time warnings from the WeatherData service that details critical weather events that have the potential to impact the UMBC community. The WeatherData service monitors developing weather patterns that will impact the specific UMBC footprint, and provides information tailored to the UMBC community not available through general weather broadcasts or the general warnings issued by the NWS. WeatherData technicians also have the ability to remotely activate the UMBC Emergency Communications System when they detect that life threatening weather will imminently impact the UMBC community. The WeatherData system is used in conjunction with the campus’s Emergency Warning System siren and the E2Campus Emergency Text Alert System to provide a comprehensive weather emergency warning system that alerts the campus of critical weather emergencies.