



November 21, 2008

Dear Neighbors:

Last year, Brown University worked with the City of Providence, various public safety departments, and community members to explore the possibility of installing emergency sirens on campus to alert our students and staff of a major incident. The City of Providence passed an ordinance governing the installation and operation of emergency notification systems. Consistent with those legal requirements, the University has installed an Emergency Warning Siren System. The first test of this system took place on Thursday, February 28, 2008. We believe this siren system has and will continue to benefit all members of the College Hill community.

A full system test must be done at least twice annually to ensure proper functioning.

THE SECOND TEST OF THE NEW EMERGENCY SIREN WARNING SYSTEM WILL TAKE PLACE ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2008 AT NOON.

The test will again include loud alert tones accompanied by voice messages. As in February, we want people on the campus and in the surrounding communities to become familiar with the tone of the sirens, but not to be unduly alarmed by the full test. The University is doing everything in its power to ensure that the College Hill community has ample warning prior to any public tests.

The University will also conduct silent testing on a monthly basis to confirm system readiness.

The University understands that there are many issues and concerns involved in implementing and testing such a system. An emergency warning system working group—formed by representatives from the University, several city agencies, and fire, police, and emergency officials—has examined and discussed these issues and has made the emergency system as responsive as possible to community concerns.

The University's system will be activated only for life-threatening emergencies that arrive without warning and require the public to take immediate action for its own safety. For example, situations that require the public to take evasive or protective action, including a hostile intruder, a sudden large chemical release, or an unpredictable force of nature like a tornado, warrant use of the system. Weather conditions, such as blizzards and hurricanes, would not result in activation of the system because advance planning is possible.

We believe the siren system will also provide a measure of security to the University's East Side neighbors. If the siren were to sound during a campus emergency, College Hill residents would be able to learn the nature of that emergency from information that will be placed on the University's Web page:

www.brown.edu

In the event of an actual emergency, prior to activating the siren Brown will contact appropriate emergency personnel in the City of Providence (police and fire). City emergency officials intend to activate city emergency communications systems to inform residents by phone regarding the nature of the emergency and will be able to respond to questions from citizens.

More information about the emergency warning siren system, including an audio version of the siren itself, will be available on the University's emergency preparedness page on November 24, 2008:

www.brown.edu/Administration/EHS/emergency_preparedness/alarm_system.html

Please feel free to call Jennifer Braga, the University's community Liaison, at (401) 863-3717 if you have any additional questions.

It is not possible to test a wide-area siren alert without some degree of inconvenience and interruption. The University and representatives from city government and public safety agencies are trying to keep that disruption to a minimum. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this important public safety work.

Sincerely,

Tim Leshan
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