

Campus Safety & Security Update

September 11, 2023

As the 2023-2024 academic year gets under way our work to modernize our approach to campus safety and security continues.

The last year saw a significant re-imagining of our campus safety, security and health strategies begin to evolve. Beginning in the late summer of 2022 our teams began a long-term, comprehensive initiative to modernize our approach to campus safety and security focusing on three core areas of operation: – teams, tools and technology, and training.

In emergency management, our teams began expanding the emphasis on CATSafe (powered by LiveSafe) as the core safety application and an important communication mechanism in our technology array; updated our policies and operating procedures for responding to emergencies; conduct two tabletop emergency exercises in partnership with Vermont Emergency Management and attended another exercise at and in partnership with Champlain College; hosted FBI active threat training on campus; and deployed a new safety initiative called CAT ECare to deploy automatic external defibrillators (AEDs), stop-the-bleed kits, and Narcan to emergency stations round our campus. There are now 40+ AEDs on campus with that number expected to increase annually for the foreseeable future.

Our emergency management team has also done significant work to update our emergency operations plans and annexes, has laid the groundwork for updated continuity of operations planning, and has conducted several tabletop training exercises with more planned throughout the school year.

In June of 2023 we invited the Department of Homeland Security to visit campus to assist with security vulnerability assessments. That multi-day visit will culminate later in 2023 with a report and tools to assist us in our ongoing efforts.

Our security technology work focused on: expanding use of our security camera system campus-wide using not only our budgeted funds but expanding through the use of Homeland Security grant funding via the Department of Public Safety; expanding the use of digital access controls (CATCards) in residence halls – with door prop alarms dialing on-duty staff now the norm for any door left ajar; and campus-wide assessments of brass key distribution, among many other initiatives.

Our team focus began with the re-constitution of a threat assessment team, together with new policy, procedures, and training as well as a new threat recognition and report portal for all affiliates in the form of a web-based toolkit. Additionally, our safety and compliance teams led a campus-wide initiative to consolidate access to our reporting mechanisms to a single unified reporting portal that is now available to all affiliates.

Our environmental risk management and core risk management teams have been hard at work on a number of projects including two significant technology initiatives to modernize our lab safety and overall risk management technology platforms.

In early 2023 we brought on a full-time training coordinator who will be working to ensure consistent scheduled delivery of key safety and security training via varied delivery methods and eventually expanding that work to a campus-wide learning management approach to training of all kinds.

Equipment upgrades include a multi-year effort replacing the 1980s-era blue light phones with the LiveSafe app – now branded CATSafe.

Coming soon are upgrades to display screens across campus that will communicate critical information during an emergency. Combined with CATSafe’s geofencing feature—an optional but highly recommended feature of the app—our Emergency Management team will have the ability to deliver urgent safety messages specific to the area of campus where you are located and enable you to interactively text messages to first responders if necessary.

While all of this has been under way our police services team continues to play a proactive role in campus safety. In addition to the array of daily calls for service and investigations the team regularly provides additional presence in off campus areas frequented by UVM students and affiliates including residential areas and the downtown core of Burlington – with special emphasis on weekend evenings.

Finally, this week – the week of September 11 – we are hosting multiple events, trainings, and competitions focusing on safety during the first ever – [Campus Safety Week](#).

For additional information, please visit a few important web-based resources including:

Overview of safety initiatives

<https://www.uvm.edu/dsc/campus-safety-security-initiatives>

Unified Reporting Portal

<https://www.uvm.edu/dsc/report-concern-uvm-campus-reporting-portal>

Threat Recognition & Assessment Toolkit

<https://www.uvm.edu/dsc/threat-recognition-reporting>

CAT ECare Program

<https://www.uvm.edu/emergency/cat-ecare>

CATSafe Download

<https://www.uvm.edu/emergency>

Safety Week

<https://www.uvm.edu/dsc/campus-safety-week>