PAUL SMITH'S COLLEGE NY-ALERT

Paul Smith's College NY-Alert is a secure, web-based emergency-alert system, which will dramatically strengthen the ability of Paul Smith's to communicate potentially life-saving information in the event of a major emergency.

Paul Smith's information technology, emergency planning officials, campus safety and student affairs staff working with the State Emergency Management Office, adapted the state's all-hazards alert and notification system, NY-Alert, for use on the Paul Smith's College campus.

Trained, authorized Paul Smith's College personnel will be able to warn students, faculty and staff who have opted in to the system of an impending emergency, such as an approaching tornado or severe weather, and provide timely and ongoing information to protect lives and minimize campus disruption.

Paul Smith's College NY-Alert can notify registrants by email, text message, telephone and cell phone messaging. Short Messaging Service and paging, dial-out voice messaging, web pages and fax.

What is Paul Smith's College NY-Alert?

Paul Smith's College NY-Alert is a system to allow Paul Smith's to warn students, employees, visitors and parents of an impending emergency and provide timely information to protect lives and minimize campus disruption. Messages can be received via cell phone (text and/or voice), telephone, email and fax. Students, faculty and staff will automatically be signed up to receive email alerts via their paulsmiths.edu addresses. In order to receive additional notification alerts, individuals will need to sign up and choose the format in which they would like to receive emergency notification messages.

Authorized and trained Paul Smith's College personnel administer the NY-Alert system. They can send emergency messages, such as emergency protective actions, warnings and post-incident information, whenever needed. In the current phase of the project, these messages are sent to all members of the campus population via email and as alerts sent to those additional portals individuals have provided. In phase two, campus personnel will be able to direct messages to specific targeted audiences, such as students or faculty.

How is Paul Smith's College NY-Alert different than NY-Alert?

The Paul Smith's College NY-Alert is a private-use implementation of the publicly available SEMO service, NY-Alert. Paul Smith's College NY-Alert notification alerts are only visible to the campus community. Paul Smith's College NY-Alert integrates SEMO's alert system with Paul Smiths' ability to provide public and secured sign-ups.

How are notification alerts distributed?

Notification alerts are distributed via email, phone and text messaging. It is recommended that campus notifiers select more than one gateway. Text messaging is the least reliable gateway choice.

REGISTRATION

When and how can students, parents, and faculty sign up?

The Paul Smith's community can begin providing emergency contact data for individuals now by completing an Emergency Contact and NY-Alert Information Form as follows:

- Students fill out and return the completed Emergency Contact and NY-Alert Information Form to the Registrar.
- Faculty and staff fill out and return the completed Employee Emergency Contact and Information Form to Human Resources.

At this time, parents cannot sign up directly for campus notification alerts. However, students may provide their parent's phone, email or cell information as the student's secondary contact information.

Is this mandatory for students?

While Paul Smith's College NY-Alert will continue to alert all students via their paulsmiths.edu email address, students have the ability to opt out of the additional notification methods the system uses.

What costs can a person incur by enrolling in Paul Smith's College NY-Alert?

Currently, the provider's standard charges will apply for voice notification alerts when cell numbers are called and standard charges will apply for text messages.

What if my text messaging/cellular provider is not listed?

If your text messaging/cellular provider is not listed, it probably uses another provider's infrastructure to provide your service. You should select the provider whose infrastructure is being used from the list. To determine which provider this is, please consult your text messaging/cellular provider's bill or customer service department.

When is the data sent to SEMO?

Data is sent from Paul Smith's system administration to SEMO at regular intervals throughout the year.

NOTIFICATION ALERTS

What constitutes an "Emergency" on the Paul Smith's campus?

A list of categories, representing the most common types of notification alerts, was developed as a guide for campus notifiers. However, any emergency where the health and/or human safety on campus is in question constitutes and "Emergency."

The list that was developed is:

- Bomb Threat – based on intelligence that indicates the threat is credible
- Civil Disturbance – large group disrupting normal campus activities
- Fire – large scale fire to building(s), wildfires, local community or industry that endangers campus.
- Hazardous Material- dangerous material, chemical, biological, nuclear spreading from a contained area.
- Major Road Closing/Incident – unanticipated event that would disrupt safe passage to and from campus
- Medical Emergency – pandemic or an event with mass casualties.
- Personal Safety – Situations that include use of weapons, violence, perpetrator(s) at large, active shooter, hostage situation or missing persons. Any situation, on or off campus that, in the judgement of the chief administrative officer or designee, constitutes an on-going or continuing threat to person or property.
- Suspicious Package – reasonable belief that a package may contain chemical, biological or nuclear substance that would cause harm to persons or property.
- Utility Failure – a major disruption or damage to utilities including gas, electrical or water.
- Weather – severe weather conditions to included flooding, snow/ice/cold, thunderstorm, wind, tornado or hurricane.

Who has permission to create notification alerts?

Only select, authenticated users have the ability to create and publish notification alerts.

How many attempts does the notification alert system make when calling?

An enrollee can register up to three phone numbers, and the system will try each number up to three times. This means that the system will try to call the enrollee up to a maximum of nine times. When a call is answered, and the person answering presses a number (to confirm they are not an answering machine), the system will consider the enrollee contacted and attempt to remove the other registered numbers from the calling queue. Depending on circumstances, this means that not all registered numbers for an enrollee will necessarily be called.

What will my phone's caller ID show when NY-Alert calls it?

The phone number displayed will be (518) 292-6634. If your caller ID looks up the corresponding name, it will display "New York Alert" or New York SEMO."

Will the alert leave a voice mail message if the phone is answered by an answering machine?

The system does NOT detect an answering machine or answering service. Unfortunately there is no standard on how long the system should wait until the phone is answered or how long the preset message should be. So if a message was left, some participants might only receive part of the message or not at all. The feature of "Press any number to receive this message" was incorporated to address this issue. The notification alert message will start immediately after a number has been pressed.

Can the alert be retrieved to listen again?

Yes, at the end of the message, you will be told, "you may call back at (518) 292-6634 to retrieve this message." If you call this number, you will be asked to enter the phone number you received the message on (for verification). If it is valid, you will then be told to hang up and NY-Alert will you back to replay the message. Only the most recent message will be available for retrieval.

Is a second notification alert sent out at the conclusion of the qualifying event?

Yes. When the situation is resolved (storm has passed, for example), an "All Clear" type of notification alert will be sent.

Do targeted notifications appear to the public?

Targeted notifications are private and appear only to the distribution groups selected by the notifier. Target notifications are not displayed publicly and do not activate the Emergency Alert System (EAS)