

WIU EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Western Illinois University has recently implemented the WIU Emergency Alert System (WEAS) to allow WIU officials the ability to reach all students and employees with time-sensitive information during unforeseen events or emergencies using voice, e-mail and text messaging. During critical situations, WEAS will be used to broadcast pertinent information and provide details on appropriate response.

The contact information you provide for the WEAS database will not be shared with other entities, and it will be kept private and confidential. The contact information is used only for the emergency alert system.

Please provide your most current contact information now by logging onto <http://www.wiu.edu/alertsystem/>.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

QUESTION: What contact data should I provide the WIU Emergency Alert System (WEAS)?

ANSWER: WEAS can maintain up to two home, two business, and two cell phone numbers [one cell phone number should be included for text messaging]; and two e-mail addresses. Students should use one of the “home” phone number fields to include their school phone number. The best emergency contact number is probably your mobile phone.

QUESTION: I heard that others received a voice message from the emergency alert system but I did not. Why?

ANSWER: It is possible that we do not have your contact information loaded in the WEAS database, or it may be inaccurate. Please log onto <http://www.wiu.edu/alertsystem/> to verify your information.

QUESTION: I heard that others received a text message on the cell phone from the emergency alert system but I did not. Why?

ANSWER: To receive text messages, you will need to enter your mobile phone number into the WEAS registration database and respond to the confirmation message (see below).

QUESTION: How do I opt-in to receive text messages from the emergency alert system?

ANSWER: You can opt-in by providing a text-enabled phone number via the web portal at <http://www.wiu.edu/alertsystem/>.

QUESTION: If I change mobile phone providers, do I need to opt-in again?

ANSWER: No, as long as you keep the same phone number. Once your phone number has been opted-in, it stays registered within the system.

QUESTION: I received the message in my e-mail inbox, but when I clicked the link to play the message nothing happened. Why?

ANSWER: You may not have a default media player like Windows Media Player or Quicktime installed. Download these players from www.microsoft.com or www.apple.com and install on your computer to listen to messages.

QUESTION: I received the message but I missed the information. What should I do?

ANSWER: While on the call, you can replay the message by pressing the star key (*) at the end of the message. You may also check your e-mail to locate the link for that message.

QUESTION: I received the message but it kept looping/repeating. Why?

ANSWER: The system does its best to detect whether it has reached a live person or an answering machine. Sometimes loud background noises may cause the system to loop. If this happens, use the mute feature on your phone or move to a quieter location to prevent the message from looping or repeating.

QUESTION: I see a caller ID display of 309/298-9999. Who is this?

ANSWER: When the WIU Emergency Alert System sends a message, it will always display Caller ID information. This number represents a unique number that was established to help you recognize that the incoming message is an emergency notification. Please save this number on your cell phone as a contact.

QUESTION: I am a student who lives at school for part of the year and at my parent's/guardian's home for part of the year. What should I record in the "Home" phone number fields when I am providing my contact information?

ANSWER: The system allows for two home phone numbers. Students should include their school residence as one home phone number. They can choose whether or not to include another home phone number for the second one.

QUESTION: If I change my address on the Emergency Contact Update Screen, will it also update my student or employee file?

ANSWER: No. At this time, all updates made on the Emergency Contact Update Screen will only update the emergency contact database.

QUESTION: My office has an extension number. I do not see an extension option on the screen.

ANSWER: The screen currently does not have an extension field, but it will in a few weeks. If you have a direct line to your office, it is better that you use that number for your emergency contact office number. Remember, this information is for emergency use only, so it will not be published or shared.

QUESTION: What should I enter on the sign-on screen when it asks for “ID Number” and “Primary E-mail Address?”

ANSWER: Enter your nine digit WIU ID number with no dashes or spaces and your WIU e-mail address. If you are unsuccessful in logging into the system after two tries, you will be locked out of the system and must wait at least 60 minutes before trying again.

QUESTION: My pre-populated address was correct, but I got an error message that says it is invalid? What should I do?

ANSWER: The vendor’s screen is currently set up to accept addresses that begin with numbers (e.g. 123 Main Street) rather than letters (e.g. PO Box 123). The vendor has been notified and is working to change this requirement. In the meantime, if the system will not accept your address, simply delete the street address, ensure the rest of your information is correct, and click “Update My Information.” The address is less critical than phone numbers and e-mail addresses for *emergency* contact information.