

## RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ACTIVATING THE WSU ALERT SYSTEM DURING CAMPUS POWER OUTAGES

WHEREAS, as outlined in its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), Wright State University is committed to an "all-hazards approach" to emergency management, with the express intent to "preserve life, protect property, and continue educational programs;"<sup>1</sup> and

WHEREAS, the University's "Operational Priorities" explicitly include the directive to "Protect property" by saving it from "harm or destruction" and acting "to prevent further harm or loss;"<sup>2</sup> and

WHEREAS, the University identifies "Utility Failure," as a "Technological and Human-Caused Hazard" that can "disrupt day-to-day operations" and "significantly interrupt the Wright State operations" if prolonged;<sup>3</sup> and

WHEREAS, during the campus-wide, 36-hour power outage of May 24–26 that took place over the Memorial Day holiday weekend of 2025, expensive equipment was damaged and large amounts of research materials stored in refrigerators, freezers, and incubators were lost, contradicting the official assessment that the outage was "limited in impact"<sup>4</sup> and highlighting a significant opportunity for improvement in emergency response at Wright State University; and

WHEREAS, the power outage began around 7:00 p.m. on a Saturday night on May 24<sup>th</sup>, the campus was not notified until 12 hours later at approximately 7:00 a.m. the next morning with the notification being sent as a Wright State Communication email; and

WHEREAS, after 12 hours without power, refrigerators were already at room temperature and freezers were already at refrigerator temperatures with their materials having already thawed; and

WHEREAS, these valuable research materials may have been able to be moved to other units on backup power had a timelier alert been issued, demonstrating a direct link between delayed communication and significant property loss; and

WHEREAS, the university has the Wright State Alert system that can reach people's attention by text, phone, and email and has historically been used to announce university closures;<sup>5,6</sup> and

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wright.edu/sites/www.wright.edu/files/page/attachments/emergency-operations-plan.pdf> .  
EOP, p. 5

<sup>2</sup> EOP, p. 11

<sup>3</sup> EOP, p. 9

<sup>4</sup> Police Chief Kurt Holden, email message to the Faculty President, June 6, 2025.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.wright.edu/public-safety/emergency-preparedness/university-emergency-notification-system-wright-state-alert>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.wright.edu/public-safety/emergency-preparedness/emergency-closing-procedure>

WHEREAS, a power outage encompassing nearly the entire campus effectively constitutes a university closure; and

WHEREAS, a decision was made not to use the Wright State Alert system because according to Wright State officials: 1) “The outage occurred during a holiday weekend when the majority of campus buildings were already closed to faculty, staff, and students. 2) “All other campus buildings were running on generator or backup power.” 3) “No life-safety systems were compromised.”<sup>7</sup> and

WHEREAS, many research operations, especially those in the biomedical sciences are 24/7 operations and students were documented as working in the research buildings at the time of the power failure, including international students who are less likely to be aware of or have plans for a U.S. holiday, such as Memorial Day; and

WHEREAS, emergency generators supply power to only a limited number of emergency light fixtures causing a safety issue with regard to limited visibility and supply power to only a limited number of emergency outlets not sufficient to power all necessary laboratory equipment with no power being supplied to building elevators or the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems; and

WHEREAS, it is not possible to ascertain the safety of each and every individual laboratory because an outside observer would not be aware of the nature on ongoing experiments across a wide range of scientific disciplines and in consideration of the fact that certain laboratory equipment, e.g., chemical fume hoods and biological safety cabinets, must be kept running at all times to contain the hazards kept within; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Wright State Faculty Senate strongly encourages the Wright State University administration to immediately revise its policies and protocols for the activation of the WSU Alert system. This revision should reflect a broader interpretation of "emergency" beyond immediate life-safety threats to include significant property loss and disruption to essential academic and research operations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the revised policy should explicitly mandate the immediate activation of the WSU Alert system, including text and telephone alerts, to all registered faculty, staff, and students in the event of a power outage affecting any campus building.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this policy update should be followed by a comprehensive communication to the entire university community regarding the new alert criteria and the importance of registering for WSU Alert messages to receive immediate notifications.

(continued)

---

<sup>7</sup> Police Chief Kurt Holden, email message to the Faculty President, June 6, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Emergency Management Executive Committee should formally review the May 24–26, 2025 power outage incident as part of its "ongoing review" of processes, and conduct an after-action report (AAR), specifically evaluating the communication protocols, the assessment of "limited impact," and their direct and indirect impacts on property preservation and student awareness. This AAR should identify specific corrective actions to be implemented to prevent similar losses and communication gaps in the future.