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# THE PROSPECTOR

THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS at EL PASO

Assayer of Student Opinion

April 18, 2007

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# UTEP says it's prepared

## University responds to Virginia Tech tragedy



Victor Portillo / The Prospector

The flags on the Geology Lawn flew at half-staff Tuesday, following the Virginia Tech massacre.

### Elida S. Perez

Entertainment Editor

After the senseless murder of 32 students and faculty members at Virginia Tech on Monday morning, UTEP officials said they are prepared for any type of disaster.

Cliff Walsh, UTEP chief of police, said the police department has plans and policies in place to communicate with students so they know what to do in case of an emergency. E-mail notices, voice mail, the UTEP Web site and utilizing the local media are among the resources Walsh said the department has in place as means to alert students.

"We are ready to respond to any emergency that should occur on campus," Walsh said. "Our primary concern is the safety of the students and the safety of the campus."

Walsh said during August's Storm 2006, they were able to effectively notify students and faculty of closures and cancellations on campus due to the storms. This, he said, is an example of how utilizing different forms of communication was effective in warning the UTEP community of the flash floods.

"Once the e-mail or information is going to go out, it would go out very quickly," Walsh said. "There would not be any delays (in receiving warnings) that I would anticipate, it would be immediate."

For information or tips on how to handle an emergency situation, call the UTEP Police Department at 747-5611 or visit [www.utep.edu/police](http://www.utep.edu/police)

If you're a UTEP student and would like to talk to someone about recent events, please call the University Counseling Center at 747-5302 or visit [www.utep.edu/counsel](http://www.utep.edu/counsel)

Faculty and staff may contact the Employee Assistance Program at 351-7785 or visit [www.deeroaks.com](http://www.deeroaks.com)

As with the tragedy that unfolded Monday morning, UTEP police realize they have to be prepared for all situations, including those not caused by natural disasters. Area colleges such as NMSU and EPCC go through the Active Shooter Response training yearly according to local media. Although UTEP only attends once every two years, Walsh said they are in the process of arranging a training session early this summer.

"We're trying to pick a time with the least amount of activity on campus," Walsh said.

The intense training lasts several days and covers practice tactics, building entry, rescue, recovery and more. Another factor Walsh said makes the department prepared is their close relationship with other local area law enforcement including the El Paso Police Department (EPPD), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and U.S. Border Patrol.

Walsh emphasized that students and faculty have to take responsibility and be aware of their sur-

roundings. Notifying police if they see something suspicious or hear someone making threats is not a waste of their time, said Walsh.

"If you thought about calling the police, you should have called us," Walsh said. "You're never wasting our time, it's what we do."

Sona Buffova, junior international business major, said she doesn't feel unsafe at UTEP, but this kind of incident can happen anywhere.

"Obviously, there was something wrong with the guy, not the institution," Buffova said.

Some students living at Miner Village also said they feel safe on campus despite the murders in Virginia.

"I was disgusted (about the murders). It makes you think it can happen anywhere," said Britt Popoff, junior criminal justice major. "You think it can never happen to you, but you can't be too safe."

Popoff, who has lived at the apartments for three years with her roommate Angie Kleinfelder, junior psychology major, said they

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# City works on many levels to curb global warming

### Sarah A. Burchett

Correspondent

The city of El Paso has begun to take measures to curb the effects of global warming.

Some El Pasoans, including Mayor John Cook, recognize a change in weather patterns and attribute it to global warming.

"The climate changes we're seeing are definitely an issue, we've never had rains like this before," Cook said. "The weather cycles are changing."

In order to minimize global warming effects, Cook says the city has begun to take action.

"All of our Sun Metro buses have been converted to compressed natural gas," he said. "We've also initiated a curbside recycling program, which will save about 5,600

trees from being cut down and processed into cardboard or paper."

Cook said the city of El Paso, along with the federal government, is trying to get traffic on the border to move at a faster pace.

"We have the dedicated commuter lanes on international bridges for those who work across the border," Cook said. "We're also looking at commercial trucks because the bridge serves as a parking lot where they wait their turn to be inspected."

He said they are working with the company Secure Origins, which is based in El Paso, to make traffic along international bridges faster.

"It is a program that starts at the shipping docks," said Rosario Holguin, chief strategist for Secure Origins. "By using a variety of technologies, we monitor the trucks

from the time they leave through specific routes. We'll know if they stop, pull over, or go into areas they shouldn't go into."

The program does not make the traffic along international bridges faster, but that is one of company's goals.

"We want to have customs be assured the trucks are safe, since the trailer is locked at the shipping docks," Holguin said. "We want them to pass customs without inspection because these companies are already certified by customs as low-risk shipments. We watch them every step of the way."

According to Holguin, more than 3,000 trucks cross the El Paso border each day and less than 5 percent can be inspected.

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File Photo / The Prospector

The city wide recycling effort kicks off Earth Day, April 22.

**M@E@N@I@A @ blu**  
Solar Tour  
Saturday, April 28. 8 pm

Thickets on sale at: All That Music, Casa Jurado on Cincinnatti and Sounds Rio Grande in Juárez