

Official: Students should be Y2K-ready

BY KIMBERLY SWEET
Senior staff writer

It's obvious it's finals week, as library study carrels begin to fill and computer labs buzz steadily with the sound of students printing their last papers.

Y2K is probably the furthest thing from many students' minds.

As the days count down to the year 2000, Gary Aerts, campus coordinator for Y2K, said students can rest assured that all the services they rely on have been tested, updated and are ready for the year 2000 rollover.

Whether students are concerned about checking e-mail or receiving grades, Aerts said he feels confident that the services will continue unaffected.

"I feel very confident about how well-protected and well-tested our student system is," Aerts said. "I give it a very high grade."

If students do see problems with services after the new year, it most likely won't be because of any Y2K glitches.

Instead, it will be because the systems are being temporarily shut down and tested.

"We're saying you could experience interruptions, not because of a problem but because we are checking the equipment," Aerts said.

The services students use over vacation, such as N-Roll to register, the "What About Me" Web site to check grades, e-mail and the system that processes report cards, are all expected to function, Aerts said.

University housing is also ready for Y2K but is taking precautions to prevent problems, said Glen Schumann, associate director of housing for facility operations.

Students are being instructed to unplug everything in their rooms to prevent power surges in case the electricity goes off.

Those who live in vacation housing in Cather Residence Hall will not be able to ride the elevators past 11 p.m. on Dec. 31 in case complications do arise, Schumann said.

Students staying in the hall over vacation will be advised to have extra

clothes, flashlights and food, and they will have to shut off their computers before 11 p.m., as well, Schumann said.

Extra heat and light sources in the hall will be secured.

For those who are away and wondering whether their computers will work when they arrive back in Lincoln, now is the time to find out, Aerts said.

"You need to ask yourself one question, 'What, if anything, am I doing with this PC that is of critical importance?'" Aerts said.

Whether it's a thesis or a game of solitaire, students can take steps to ensure the functions they care about most will remain intact as the new year arrives.

■ The first step is to look at the hardware. Looking up the Web site of the manufacturer is one way to determine if your computer is equipped. Otherwise, students should call the manufacturer to determine whether the equipment inside the computer is Y2K-compliant.

■ The next step is to look at the operating system. For those who have an old version of Windows or another

"Don't wait until the last minute to do what you need to do."

GARY AERTS
campus coordinator for Y2K

system, the odds are that it will experience complications after the new year. Students can once again explore the Web site and call the manufacturer to make sure their equipment will stay functioning.

■ Students should check each application with the vendor to make sure it is compliant.

■ The last step is to back up any data that is important. Remember, if any one of the previous steps fails to be Y2K-compliant, data will not be accessible.

If a computer is connected to the network, it could be vulnerable to viruses that hackers may release to commemorate the year 2000, Aerts said.

Virus protection is available to UNL students at no charge through Information Services.

The download instructions are at <http://software.unl.edu/antivirus/>.

Even if these products have been installed on a computer, it is important to update them.

As for other Y2K concerns, Aerts said he encouraged people to make preparations ahead of time.

Having cash and extra food on hand and making sure the gas tank is full are important, he said.

Even though it is finals week, it is important to remember one thing, Aerts said.

"Don't wait until the last minute to do what you need to do."

Staffs set to work for Y2K

■ More people will be working instead of going to parties on New Year's.

BY KIMBERLY SWEET
Senior staff writer

Students, faculty and staff are making plans now for how they are going to celebrate the new year.

But for some at UNL, the celebrations will be a little less festive.

Instead of taking to the streets, they will be sitting in offices across campus, making sure the university makes it through Jan. 1, 2000, successfully.

Michael Ruhrdanz, the director of networking and operations for Information Services, will be spending the new year in his office.

He will be coordinating the 10 staff people responsible for making sure central computing systems, such as e-mail, Lotus notes and the research computing systems, survive the year 2000 rollover.

Ten people are scheduled to be in before and after the new year, and 30 people will be on call in case difficulties arise, Ruhrdanz said.

The telecommunications center will have extra staff welcoming in the year as well.

Usually two operators man the switchboard after midnight on any given night of the year, including New Year's Eve, said Bruce Bernt, manager of operator services.

Because of the importance of the central communication center, five operators will be on hand this New Year's Eve.

Four other office personnel will be on hand to monitor the computing system in the office, said Marie Lovitt, the center's secretary.

Members of the office will be in close contact with Alltel phone company and campus police, she said.

Facilities and Management, the department responsible for monitoring buildings and systems across campus, isn't sure how many people it will need to be present this New Year's Eve.

But the department will have a core group of people on duty to monitor the situation, said Richard McDermott, assistant vice chancellor for facilities management.

Even if everything seems to go okay as the new year starts, a number of staff will still be needed to check things around campus, McDermott said.

"Even though we may not see anything visibly, we are going to check things out before anyone goes home," he said.

"We're always here — day and night."

RICHARD McDERMOTT
assistant vice chancellor
for facilities management

University Police will have extra officers on duty on Dec. 31, said Bill Manning, assistant chief of police services for University Police.

The department has people out every night of the year regardless of the holiday, but will have additional people on hand in case the unexpected happens, Manning said.

Even though it is the new year, many of the support staff are used to celebrating the holiday in a less festive atmosphere, because many of their offices are expected to monitor the university 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

"We're always here — day and night," McDermott said.

But even though many are used to celebrating the holiday on campus at work, some sympathy is still appreciated, Ruhrdanz said.

"If anyone at the downtown party wants to bring me beverages and food, I'll be here," he said jokingly.

NU police working for a safe campus

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"We shake a lot of doors," Clifton said about security checks. "And provide other services that have to be done."

Clifton is one of 25 police officers and 15 community service officers who patrol campus to ensure the safety of UNL students and their belongings.

Clifton deals with a lot of personal property thefts and thefts of property from cars.

Thursday from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m., he meticulously patrolled parking lots searching for evidence of car thefts.

"People need to take their car stereos out and keep track of their things," Clifton said as he surveyed rows of parked cars.

Occasionally, residence hall authorities call University Police officers to investigate drug and alcohol cases, Clifton said.

"Dorms are a dumb place to smoke dope," Clifton said. "Somebody always smells it and calls it in."

Sgt. Bill Manning said when students are not around during vacations, the University Police department is still hard at work.

The police department deals with a lot of thefts over winter break, Manning said.

This winter, the police department wants students to move cars that they are not taking home to the parking lot on the northwest corner of 14th and Avery streets, Manning said.

Police officers will patrol that parking lot frequently over the break, Manning said.

Clifton generally patrols from 22nd to Ninth streets, and from Q to Holdrege streets when school is in session.

However, University Police officers have jurisdiction anywhere in Lancaster County, Clifton said.

Campus police officers work with the Lincoln Police Department and the Lancaster County Sheriffs Department because of their expanded jurisdiction, Manning said.

"It's impossible not to overlap," Manning said.

Lancaster County Sheriffs frequently help UNL police officers during large events, which require more staff, Manning said.

University police officers are armed and commissioned state deputy

sheriffs with full arrest powers. CSOs are unarmed and do not have arrest powers, Manning said.

CSOs try to keep track of suspicious activity and behavior, Clifton said.

"CSOs are there for their eyes and their ears," Clifton said.

Both CSOs and University Police officers spend most of their time helping people, Clifton said.

"It makes the job worthwhile when people are genuinely happy and polite, because we did a good job," Clifton said.

Holiday tips for students

From staff reports

University police recommend students take the following crime prevention measures to improve campus safety and security over winter break:

■ Take all movable property home.

■ Take vehicles home.

■ If students have to leave vehicles on campus, they should move them to the parking lot on the northwest corner of 14th and Avery streets where the police department can monitor their vehicles.

■ Unplug everything that does not have to remain running in case of power surges.

■ To avoid car accidents, do not rush when leaving town.

■ Get vehicles serviced before leaving.

■ Bring a winter travel kit with first-aid materials, blankets and food in case of car trouble.

Police: Woman arrested for killing

■ Police say a Lincoln man was killed after being shot in the chest.

From staff reports

Lincoln police say they arrested a 26-year-old Omaha woman Sunday morning for allegedly shooting and killing a 19-year-old Lincoln man. Police responding to medical

emergency call at 11:22 a.m. Sunday found Taurian L. Smith shot in the chest outside a house at 115 Blue Flame Rd., Lincoln Police Capt. David Beggs said.

Paramedics took Smith to Bryan LGH West, where he was pronounced dead, Beggs said.

The shooting death was Lincoln's ninth murder of 1999.

Tamera M. Moore was arrested for second-degree murder at the

house on Blue Flame Road in northwest Lincoln. Beggs said she "exchanged words" with Smith before shooting the 19-year-old.

Police are not releasing information on what relationship Smith and Moore had before the shooting, the type of gun used in the shooting or who lived in the house on Blue Flame Road.

An autopsy will be performed on Smith today, Beggs said.

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Celebrate the holidays



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