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Dan Venis, the Physical Plant electrician, said he has received a copy of Boosinger's report and is working on the violations in each building as they occur in the report. He said he was working on page seven of the 24-page report.

Although many repairs are needed, the University took a step Wednesday in attempting to fix its problems.

Muriel Jackson, assistant vice president for administration, said Wednesday's pre-proposal meeting with prospective engineers was held to ask the engineers to evaluate the systems and advise the University of possible modifications.

About 15 companies sent representatives to the meeting, she said. The University expects to receive all proposals by Jan. 22.

"We're sort of poised on the brink of the whole matter," she said, adding that she could neither estimate the cost to renovate the system nor predict the time to complete the work.

Boosinger said he estimated more than \$1 million and from three to five years is needed to bring the University to code.

Jackson said the campus call boxes, which directly connect speakers to the dispatcher at the safety office, are in complete working order.

However, Boosinger said if the system was working properly, malfunctions with equipment such as fire exits, detectors and buzzers would send trouble signals to the public safety office, advising the office of the need for repair.

Carl DiPaolo, former Physical Plant electrician and alarm technician, said he tried for three years to convince the University to correct the unsafe status of the fire alarm systems.

DiPaolo, who owns an alarm company, resigned this fall. He said the administration would not authorize new repairs for the systems and, instead, wanted him to install illegal systems.

"Out of five systems, two are worth a damn and three don't meet the codes," he said.

The five systems that connect to the public safety office are the Gamewell, the motel board, the digital system, the Simplex and the two-systems gauge.

The digital, Simplex and two-systems gauge are approved systems, DiPaolo said.

DiPaolo and Boosinger both agree the Gamewell and the motel board are outdated and are not approved systems.

The Gamewell, which receives the fire alarm signal from Mac Court, was installed in the 1920s, DiPaolo said. This system only reports fire and does not report malfunctions of alarms or detectors in buildings.

If pull stations or sprinklers were damaged in Mac Court or in other buildings connected to the Gamewell, no one would know of the problem until the fire marshal made an inspection or until a fire started.

When the Gamewell, which sits underneath the dispatcher's desk, receives a signal from one of its fire alarms, the message produces a series of holes punched into the paper that runs through the machine, DiPaolo said.

He said one of the dangers of this system is if the dispatcher is away from his desk, the paper-punching sound of the machine would not be heard and would not notify anyone of a fire.

DiPaolo said the motel board, which is an unapproved system, was designed to protect motel television sets from theft. The board contains 75 separate lights to identify problems, but numerous false alarms render it impractical.

The motel board is installed in the University Inn, but DiPaolo said he refused the University's orders to install it in Riley Hall, which now contains the digital system.



Photo by Andre Kanier

Fire alarms in many University structures are too old or are inadequate to properly warn occupants to evacuate in the event of a fire, according to a report by the city's fire marshal.

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