

# Packing for disaster

## College evaluates readiness

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DEBBIE FOX

The world carries multiple threats, including but not limited to earthquakes and mass murders. Clackamas Community College could face any catastrophe.

In light of the Oct. 1 shooting at Umpqua Community College, the question remains: is CCC prepared for an unexpected event?

Gregg Ramirez, Clackamas Fire District No. 1 Emergency Manager, said, "Prevention should be addressed as well as response tips. There should be a campus-wide awareness program for someone experiencing a mental health crisis and reporting suspicious activity or packages. If you see something, say something." Ramirez also suggests quarterly fire drills, earthquake drills and active threat drills. Practice what should be done in an actual event.

The Clackamas Fire Prevention and Education department recommend a student should have in their possession a cell phone and charger, a family communication plan and a 72-hour kit in their car or a student backpack emergency kit. FEMA has a checklist available online, free of charge, telling people what they should be carrying in an emergency kit.

Bobby Smith, Director of Campus Safety said, "We are rather fortunate here because a lot of our structures are concrete based, so it will withstand a lot from some of the natural disasters and weather disasters that follow. We always recommend, like they have always taught us, go to a secure part of the building — a doorway."

If all power is lost and the cell towers are down, CCC will have to rely on the old-fashioned way, according to Smith. Campus officers will go to each building, checking to see if there are still people inside and assisting

in evacuation efforts. Building managers will be notified and officers will go door to door to let staff know of the outage.

Lori Hall, Public Information Officer at CCC said, "I think the ready.gov website, because they deal with all emergency preparedness, especially the weather ones, are important for people to know."

When the unexpected happens, be part of the solution, not the problem. Prepare and be ready for all types of disasters. Be aware of your surroundings. Take inventory of your environment and gather important facts. These tips may mean the difference between life and death.



Bobby Smith



## How to prepare for an emergency

In the event that there is a shooter on campus, take precautions to ensure your own safety.

According to the Active Shooter Reference Guide from U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

Knowing what to do can save lives. When law enforcement arrives, remain calm and follow instructions. Drop items in your hands including your coat, purse, backpack or anything else that might contain a weapon. Raise your hands and spread your fingers, keeping your hands visible at all times. Avoid quick movements toward officers, such as holding on to them for safety and avoid pointing, screaming or yelling. Do not ask questions when you are evacuating.

Important information to provide to 911 operators includes the location of the active shooter, the number of shooters, physical description of shooter(s), number and type of weapons used, and potential victims at the location.

When an active shooter is in your vicinity, you must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with the situation. You have three options:

**1** Run. Create an escape route and plan in mind and leave your belongings behind. Evacuate, regardless of whether others agree to follow. Don't try to be a hero, but help others escape, if possible. Do not attempt to move the wounded, but prevent others from entering an area where the active shooter may be.

**2** Hide. Hide in an area out of the shooter's view. Lock the door or block entry to your hiding place. Silence your cell phone (including vibrate mode) and remain quiet.

**3** Fight. This is a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger. Attempt to disarm the shooter, acting with as much physical aggression as possible. Improvise weapons or throw items at the active shooter. Commit to your actions because your life depends on it.