Frequently Asked Questions

What is VUMC LabAlert?
VUMC LabAlert is Vanderbilt University Medical Center’s critical information notification system. VUMC LabAlert gives faculty and staff the ability to react quickly and prevent research from being affected in the event of a system outage. VUMC LabAlert is a free service that runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

How will VUMC LabAlert notify me?
VUMC LabAlert will send messages based on the delivery methods a subscriber chooses: cell phone (voice or text), landline, and/or e-mail account. You will provide your preferred contact methods during sign-up.

What situations will trigger the VUMC LabAlert system?
VUMC LabAlert is designed to alert members of the research community during planned or unplanned utility or network outages. An alert will be sent if an outage affects more than 50% of a building floor and will last longer than two hours. VUMC LabAlert will NOT be used for individual room outages.

VUMC LabAlert will not be used for communications such as Medical Center event announcements, news, or advertisements.

Why should I sign up?
VUMC LabAlert will be the primary method for notifying the research community in the event of utility and/or network outages that may affect ongoing research.

How do I sign up?
A link to the sign-up page is available at http://www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/labalert and includes easy step by step instructions. You will be able to add, update, or remove your contact information at any time. You will be responsible for updating your information as it changes.

Why should I list more than one device when subscribing to VUMC LabAlert?
VUMC LabAlert is designed to facilitate early notification during potentially critical system outages. Sending the same message using multiple methods helps ensure that the notification will be received.

How do I know if I am signed up?
You will receive a confirmation email message at the official Vanderbilt address you provide on the sign-up form. If you do not receive a confirmation email, login to the VUMC LabAlert system and check the accuracy of your information. If you need further assistance, you may email your questions to VUMCLabAlert@vanderbilt.edu.

Will my information be kept private?
Yes, the information that you put into the VUMC LabAlert system is private and will not be shared with anyone.

How will I know when a call or message is from VUMC LabAlert?
Phone calls and text messages originating from the LabAlert system will show the generic Vanderbilt phone number, (615) 343-0473. E-mails sent via VUMC LabAlert will come from a generic address, but the name will
always appear as "VUMC LabAlert." Additionally, the subject line will always be specific to the incident. The e-mails are automated from the VUMC LabAlert system and are NOT set up to receive incoming emails.

I have already signed up for AlertVU. Do I need to sign up for VUMC LabAlert too?
Yes. VUMC LabAlert is specific to the Medical Center research community and will be used to communicate pertinent information related to system outages.

My department has already instituted a notification system. Do I need to sign up for VUMC LabAlert too?
Yes. VUMC LabAlert is specific to the Medical Center research community and will be used to communicate pertinent information related to system outages.

Will we still receive campus-wide e-mails about emergency situations on campus?
Yes. VUMC LabAlert is an addition to Vanderbilt's emergency notification tools, which include mass e-mails, the Outdoor Warning System, AlertVU, and more. Those tools will continue to be used in the situations for which they were designed.

Am I required to sign up for VUMC LabAlert?
VUMC LabAlert is a free, voluntary, opt-in service. All members of the Medical Center research community are encouraged, but not required, to participate.

Can anyone sign up?
VUMC LabAlert is limited to members of the Vanderbilt community and requires a valid Vanderbilt email address and a password of your choosing.

Is text messaging the best way to receive alerts?
While text messaging is one way to receive VUMC LabAlert notifications, its effectiveness is limited by the capacity of cell phone service providers to deliver these messages. The Medical Center encourages VUMC LabAlert subscribers to register multiple contact methods and not to rely on text messaging alone to receive notifications.

What is the technical backbone of VUMC LabAlert?
The Medical Center has contracted with W.A.R.N. (Wide Area Rapid Notification), a national company based in Gallatin, TN, to provide VUMC LabAlert. W.A.R.N.’s clients include public safety agencies; emergency management agencies; federal, state, county, and city governments; the US military; the Department of Homeland Security; and several other colleges and universities. To learn more about W.A.R.N., visit www.warncalling.com.

Questions or Comments?
If you have any questions about the VUMC LabAlert system, please send a message to VUMCLabAlert@vanderbilt.edu.