



**For Immediate Release:** 05.15.08

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**Heightened police presence part of drill**

**High school students to help Village test emergency response systems**

Residents who notice a heightened police presence around Oak Park and River Forest High School on Fri., May 23 should not be alarmed. These officers are among the nearly 200 public safety personnel, volunteers and observers participating in an emergency preparedness drill in the field house that day.

The four-hour, mid-day emergency response drill will use the high school as the mock clinic site and students as residents who come to pick up medication for their families. No real medicines will be dispensed and no personal information collected. The drill will be a health education component of the participating students' physical education classes.

Students will only be pretending, but the process will be similar to how a real incident would be managed. The goal, officials say, is to test the Village's ability to activate, distribute and dispense its share of national defense medicine stockpiles should a real medical emergency arise.

The high school is considered an ideal drill site, not only because of available mock clinic space, but also because of its large, on-site population. In a real emergency, the Village would need to dispense 1,080 doses of medicine every hour for 48 hours to treat the entire population of Oak Park.

The medicine-dispensing event is just the most visible phase of the drill. Behind the scenes, the Village will be testing its incident command structure, which would manage resources in a real disaster, as well as its mutual aid agreements with other communities.

Other communities, including Skokie, Stickney and Evanston, are sending administrators to observe as part of their own emergency planning efforts.

For more information on the drill or emergency planning, call the Oak Park Department of Public Health at 708.358.5480 or e-mail [health@oak-park.us](mailto:health@oak-park.us). Information also is posted on the Village web site [www.oak-park.us/drill](http://www.oak-park.us/drill).

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