SAFETY AND SECURITY ASSESSMENT

NSHE Claude Howard System Administration Office | Reno, Nevada

Prepared for the NSHE Safety and Security Committee, October 23, 2026

1. Purpose and Scope

I conducted a safety and security assessment of the Claude Howard System Administration Office in Reno. The assessment incorporates input from System Administration employees regarding safety and security concerns and areas for improvement within the building. This report integrates those observations and concerns into a single assessment with recommended actions for System Administration leadership. It is not a technical certification of the building's security systems.

2. Executive Summary

Overall, I found the facility's interior access controls to be sound. Reception releases the front entry, the rear entry requires a key card, and after-hours access also requires alarm credentials. The reflective and tinted windows also limit visibility from outside. The main concerns included the parking lot and exterior approaches, emergency readiness and notifications, public Board of Regents meetings, and visitor procedures.

3. Findings and Recommendations

A. Emergency Preparedness and Employee Training

The facility has not conducted formal emergency preparedness training and exercises consistently in recent years. Active-threat and workplace-violence training is overdue, and CPR/AED instruction has not been refreshed since before COVID. The facility does not currently have an active safety committee. In addition, the facility has not clearly defined a building-wide process for notifying occupants and accounting for employees during an evacuation, and personnel in back-office areas may not reliably receive prompt notice of an incident at the front of the building. I recommend the following:

- Reestablish a facility safety committee with clear leadership responsibility and a recurring meeting schedule.
- Schedule recurring active-threat and workplace-violence training, evacuation and fire drills, CPR/AED training, and Stop the Bleed training appropriate to employee roles.
- Coordinate evacuation procedures and assembly-area education with UNR Environmental Health and Safety.
- Have System Administration leadership set training dates and clear attendance expectations for all employees.
- Define a building-wide emergency notification and employee-accountability procedure, including how back-office areas will be warned of an incident at the front of the building.
- Brief all employees on the locations and use of first-aid supplies, the AED, and fire extinguishers, and evaluate whether additional emergency medical supplies such as naloxone and epinephrine auto-injectors are appropriate.

- Establish a formal lock-up procedure for the last employee leaving the office to confirm doors, windows, alarms, and other security systems are secured.

B. Emergency Notifications

Some staff told me they do not consistently receive University of Nevada, Reno emergency alerts, particularly when using NSHE email accounts. I recommend confirming how each System Administration employee is or can be enrolled and correcting any gaps.

- Coordinate with UNR IT and NSHE IT personnel to confirm how System Administration staff are enrolled in emergency notifications and correct any gaps.

C. Visitor Management, Access Control, and Public Meetings

The building's controlled internal entry works well, but the office does not use a consistent visitor sign-in/sign-out log. Meetings of the public Board of Regents meetings may require additional visitor-management attention because of increased attendance and the potential for visitors to enter non-public areas.

I recommend the following:

- Implement a visitor sign-in/sign-out log and clearly identify when a visitor requires an escort.
- Use stanchions or similar barriers during public meetings to keep public circulation separate from employee work areas.
- Evaluate whether higher-risk meetings or after-hours conditions warrant a two-person reception or entry protocol.
- Continue to provide a police officer and/or a CSO presence at meetings.
- Confirm that the rear entrance glazing is shatter-resistant and add appropriate security film if it is not.

D. Exterior Lighting, Grounds, Parking, and Roof Access

The parking lot is the most significant recurring exterior concern. Employees described approximately two to four recent incidents over a six-month period involving individuals in the lot or near the building. Reported conditions include non-employee parking and loitering, use of exterior electrical outlets, individuals cooking from vehicles, broken liquor bottles after weekends, and drivers speeding through the lot near the end of the workday. Existing employee-only signs are difficult to see where vegetation obscures them, and employees expressed discomfort using the lot after dark. The photographs in this report document areas of concern. I recommend the following:

- Conduct an after-dark walkthrough and improve lighting on the west side of the building and in the rear parking lot where needed.
- Have the contracted landscaping provider remove debris, trim vegetation that blocks signs or sightlines, and follow a documented service schedule.
- Install larger, more visible “NSHE employee-only parking”.
- Increase routine patrol checks of the parking lot, including evening hours and Monday mornings.
- Evaluate traffic-control measures to discourage drivers from using the lot as a high-speed cut-through.
- Install lockable covers on exterior electrical outlets where practical.

- Inspect potential roof-access routes and determine whether reasonable deterrent measures are warranted.
- Document the status and completion of all lighting, landscaping, surveillance, and parking-security recommendations to support future review and follow-up.

E. Security Cameras, Intrusion Alarms, and Panic Button

Responsibility for the camera access, intrusion alarm, and panic-button systems is not clearly assigned. Camera access has not been reliably maintained through staffing changes, and the process of retrieving recordings for an investigation remains unclear. Currently, NSHE SCS does have access and can retrieve any video that is needed. The alarm system's primary contact and backup call chain require confirmation, as personnel have changed.

Several employees were unaware of the front-desk panic alarms or the alarm keypad's emergency functions, and the dates of the most recent functional tests could not be confirmed. Recent police responses have also included false intrusion alarms in the early morning.

I recommend the following:

- Identify which authorized building personnel should have access to view camera footage, confirm SCS's existing access, and document procedures for granting access and retrieving recordings when needed
- Test the panic buttons, intrusion alarm, and keypad emergency functions with UPDNC, dispatch, and the responsible vendor.
- Refresh alarm-disarming and lock-up instructions for staff and other authorized after-hours users.
- Designate a building security coordinator and backup contacts with responsibility for camera access, alarm contacts, testing, and follow-up.
- Brief all employees on panic-alarm locations and the alarm keypad's fire, medical, and police functions.
- Confirm and document the alarm system's primary and backup emergency-contact call chain.

F. Contractor and Facilities Coordination

Vendors and maintenance personnel sometimes arrive without advance notice, leaving employees unsure who is expected or what work has been authorized.

I recommend the following:

- Designate one point of contact for scheduled work and contractor arrivals.
- Require advance notice, clear identification, and appropriate escort or work-area access for outside vendors.
- Improve coordination among facilities, contracted service providers, and NSHE staff.

4. Calls for Service Context

I reviewed three additional incidents dated June 3, October 8, and October 13, 2026. All were cleared as false alarms. Two involved custodial personnel and alarm-disarming procedures. The third resulted in an interior and exterior check with no sign of forced entry. I also reviewed the reported contact with an individual who was sleeping behind the building; the individual cooperated and left when contacted. The available information does not show a pattern of significant ongoing criminal activity at the facility.

5. Conclusion

Based on this assessment, the Reno System Administration Office benefits from sound controlled entry and is generally viewed as a secure workplace. I did not identify a pattern of significant ongoing criminal activity. The most important improvements are practical: strengthen emergency readiness and building-wide accountability, re-establish a safety team, make emergency notifications reliable, clarify visitor and contractor procedures, assign security-system ownership, and improve exterior parking-lot conditions. Many recommendations are procedural and should be achievable without major capital expense. I recommend that leadership assign an owner and reasonable completion date to each approved action and document follow-through.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBIT

Exterior Lighting and Parking Conditions

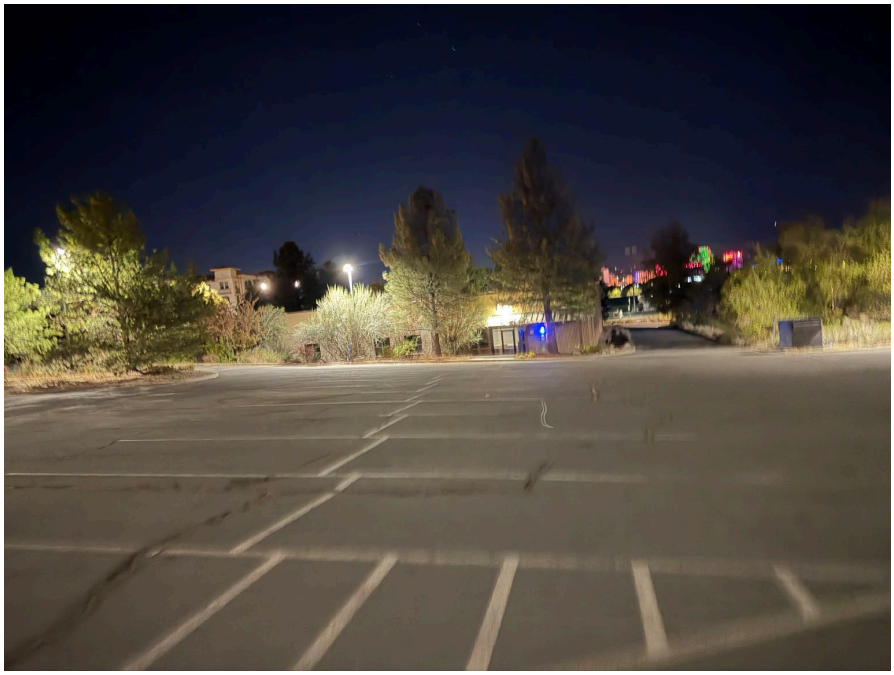


Photo 1. Parking lot at night. Lighting is concentrated around the perimeter, leaving the foreground comparatively dark.



Photo 2. Side driveway and building exterior at night. The west-side approach is noticeably darker than the illuminated entrance area. The arrow identifies a potential location for additional lighting.