Slippery conditions raise concerns





PHOTOS | VICTORIA CRUZ

Ice near the Wilkinson Hall parking lot on Feb. 20.

Ice alert indicating that ice is present at steps near Brownell Hall.

By Victoria Cruz
Contributor

Many students are becoming increasingly frustrated with the lack of proper snow and ice removal on campus walkways and staircases as winter weather continues.

These hazardous conditions have sparked safety and responsibility concerns.

Healthcare studies major Kenese Spence, a sophomore, shared their concerns stating: "They need to start putting more salt down. I almost slipped a few times, and there is nothing to catch yourself on."

Many students share this same sentiment.

Despite consistent icy conditions, preventative measures like salting are not being implemented with the frequency they should be.

The stairs to Brownell Hall have become a major concern for residents and staff members.

No preventive measures are happening before or after snow storms.

Math major Nic Mahoney, a junior, and resident of the building highlighted the severity of this issue.

"The stairs at Brownell are so slippery that I sometimes need to take another route," Mahoney said. "They haven't not been icy in the past two weeks, and nobody has done anything about it."

In the discussion of these stairs and walkways, it is important to note that this area specifically is maintained by private state contractors and not university facilities operations.

Despite frequent reports and requests for action from Brownell RA's and staff, delays and oversight in maintenance persist.

Similar concerns have been raised about the stairs and area around Engleman Hall.

Facilities operations have opted to use makeshift safety measures to solve the issue while not addressing the root of the problem.

"The stairs at Engleman are a safety hazard. They put up tape, which I understand, but students are just going around it, which is fair because it is an inconvenience for them. I don't know why they don't just do a good job of removing the ice instead of putting tape up," said physics major Lily Blair, a sophomore.

Failure to properly ensure student safety in slippery conditions leads students to navigate unsafe conditions daily.

Some students have proposed potential solutions to improve campus safety because of the lack of action by campus officials.

Mahoney said that there should be dedicated job positions created to solve this concern.

"I feel like they should have a job opportunity for people to put salt on the stairs and sidewalks," Mahoney said.

Math major Liam Hourihan, a sophomore, supported this idea while emphasizing the need for on campus employment opportunities.

"What about student work? I am trying to get a job on campus. I would salt!" Hourihan said.

Some particularly high traffic walkways, like the intersection between Connecticut Hall and the new School of Business, are particularly dangerous.

Hourihan, also mentioned the treacherous walkway that students, staff and faculty must cross.

"The crosswalk can be so crazy and dangerous sometimes," Hourihan said.

This intersection is frequently used by students who are travelling between residence halls, classes, and meals.

It is particularly treacherous after storms, due to the extremely slippery conditions and the danger posed should warrant quicker action.

Despite growing student concern, it remains to be seen whether university officials will take the necessary steps to improve safety on campus or not.

Until then, students should remain cautious while attempting to navigate campus walkways and stairs during these winter months.

Hispanic students welcomed

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Machismo, which is often tied to toxic masculinity, leads many Latinos to suppress their emotions and thoughts, as expressing vulnerability may not align with cultural expectations.

Recognizing this, Stephanie Perez works to challenge this mindset and foster open dialogue about mental health.

"We talk about their mental health and just overall being vulnerable," Perez said.

Consequently, students are able to offer each other support.

"We share personal things and give each other advice, which is not something that is accepted in this culture," Perez said.

Public health major Deshyra Hicks, a sophomore, said that she thinks spaces for cultures are important for the success of students.

"I like that Southern has these groups for every kind of student," Hicks said.

According to the university's website, the institution is recognized as an emerging Hispanic-Serving Institution (eHSI).

An eHSI is defined as a college or university with an undergraduate Hispanic enrollment ranging from 15 to 24%.

This highlights the university's growing commitment to supporting its diverse student population, particularly those from Hispanic and Latino backgrounds.

For this reason, Perez said it is important for more groups like La Communidad to be formed.

"The Hispanic population is growing so there needs to be more spaces for this group to support them," said Perez

Students navigate safety on and off campus

By Brianna Wallen
News Editor

For many students attending college, safety is at the top of their priorities as they navigate both campus life and the surrounding city.

Biology major Morgan McKenzie, a freshman, said that she feels relatively safe on campus, due to the visible police presence and safety measures.

"I see a lot of police cars around and the emergency poles, so I honestly feel safe," McKenzie said.

McKenzie said that her only concern while staying at the university is that it is an open campus.

"I notice a lot of random people on campus, so it is a bit scary," McKenzie said. "Like anyone can roam around and talk to us."

While students may feel safe on campus itself, their concerns mostly revolve around the city.

In a city such as New Haven, with a high crime rate, many students are particularly cautious about their surroundings.

Although New Haven Police Department records show that homicide and gunshots in New Haven decreased by more than 30% last year, many students remain concerned about the gun violence.

McKenzie said that she feels uneasy about the prevalence of crime in New Haven.

"Every news time I hear about New Haven in the news it involves guns," McKenzie said.

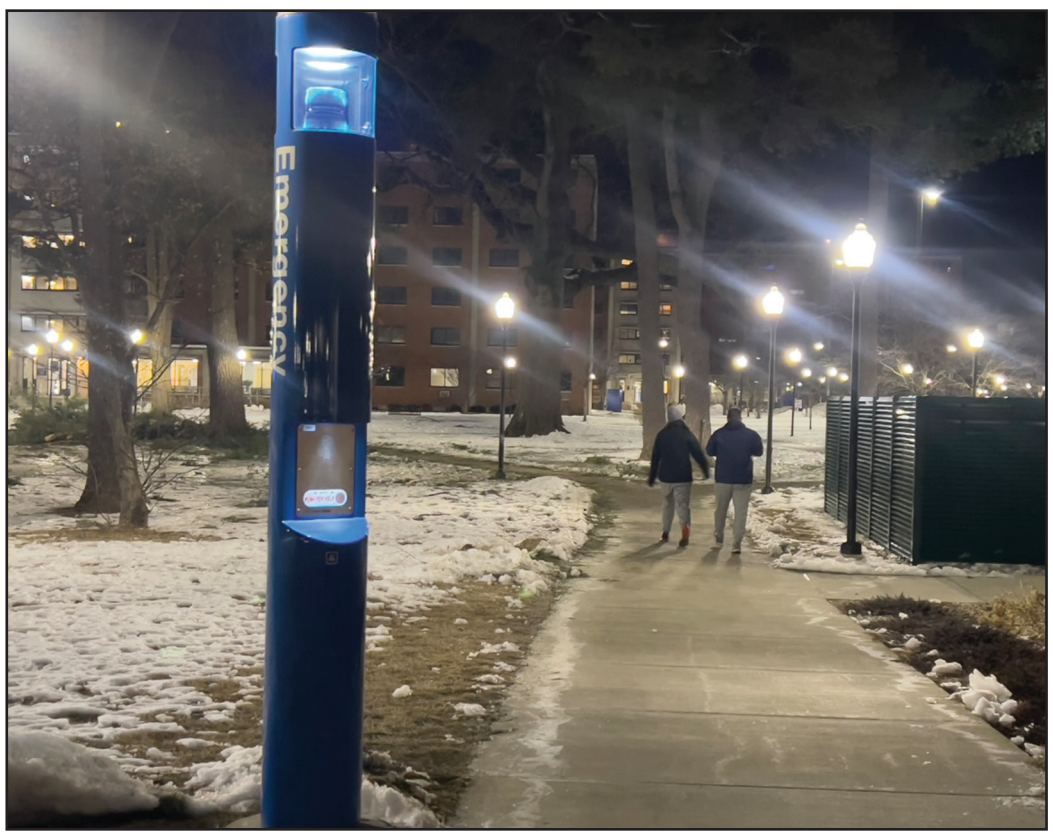
Accounting major Kendrick Lagamao, a sophomore, said that he also feels safe on campus.

"I feel like the cops do their job well and could protect us if anything happens," Lagamao said.



PHOTOS | BRIANNA WALLEN

Accounting major Kendrick Lagamao, a sophomore, in Chase Hall lobby on Feb. 19.



One of the many Emergency Poles on campus located in front of Chase Hall on Feb. 19.

To help feel a better sense of security, Lagamao said that he and his friends travel in packs around campus.

"I feel like I'm always around people, so it is less likely for something to happen," Lagamao said.

Similarly, other students also take their safety into their own hands.

"I carry pepper spray and an alarm button, just in case," communication disorders major Arian Romero, a freshman, said.

Romero said that she carries these safety precautionary items due to an interaction that happened earlier this school year in New Haven.

"Someone was following behind me and I just felt so scared," Romero said.

McKenzie said that she prefers to stay on campus and not explore the city, due to her identity as a woman.

"I feel like I need to be on my p's and q's," McKenzie said. "We as women have to be extra cautious due to the world we live in."

For many students like McKenzie, it is their first time being away from home by themselves. McKenzie said that her mom often worries about her safety.

"When I came here my mom gave me a nice long talk about how I need to be aware of my surroundings and pay attention," McKenzie said.

Lagamao said he particularly notices this difference in the level of concern for safety when he is around his female friends.

"I am mostly around my guard when I'm around my girlfriends because I feel like they are mostly targeted by weird people, but when I'm by myself I'm fine," Lagamao said.

Lagamao said that the split in realities for men and women is a sad reflection of the world we live in.

"It is unfortunate that women have to carry weapons and be on high alert," Lagamao said. "There should be a higher level of safety and protocol out there to protect them more."