

TORNADO SIRENS

Frequently Asked Questions



Who is responsible for sounding the siren?

Depending on the city you live in, tornado sirens are activated by either County 9-1-1 Dispatchers, Fire Department personnel, or Public Works personnel.

When are sirens sounded?

Sirens are sounded when the National Weather Service observes conditions on radar that indicate a possible tornado has developed or is likely to develop and issue a Tornado Warning. Sirens may also be activated when trained public safety storm spotters observe a tornado or a rotating, lowering funnel cloud. Additionally, public safety officials can have sirens sounded for extreme wind events such as straight line winds expected to be near or in excess of 80 mph.

What should I do when the sirens sound?

Do not go outside to see what the weather is doing! Tornadoes are very difficult to predict and development can occur very rapidly. **SEEK SHELTER IMMEDIATELY!!!!!!**

- In a home or building, move to a pre-designated shelter, such as a basement.
- If an underground shelter is not available, move to an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor and get under a sturdy piece of furniture.
- Stay away from windows.
- Get out of automobiles and move to a low lying area.
- Do not try to outrun a tornado in your car; instead, leave it immediately.
- Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes and should be abandoned.
- Occasionally, tornadoes develop so rapidly that advance warning is not possible. Remain alert for signs of an approaching tornado. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most deaths and injuries.

When is it safe to leave shelter?

Once sheltered, remain there. Monitor local AM/FM radio reports, television reports, or a NOAA Weather Radio. These media outlets will notify you when the tornado threat has passed and it is safe to leave your shelter.

SIRENS WILL NOT BE SOUNDED AGAIN TO LET YOU KNOW IT IS "ALL CLEAR"

Sirens will sound for three (3) minutes. This is your notice to immediately seek shelter.

If the sirens sound again it indicates that the tornado warning has been extended, a new warning has been issued, or a tornado has been spotted and verified on the ground near the area.

Remember that tornado sirens are outdoor warning systems. You may not be able to hear sirens in your community if you are in a building, vehicle or in adverse weather conditions. All citizens should purchase a NOAA Weather Radio that can alert you to approaching severe weather threats and other community hazards. Weather Radios can be found at most department and electronics stores.

Develop a Family Safety Plan for Home, Work and School!

Being prepared is being safe.