



Outdoor Warning Siren Activation Guideline

Purpose: To establish common guidelines for activation of outdoor warning sirens for the City of Platteville.

Background: Confusion hinders public response. Using common/consistent guidelines for the outdoor warning sirens minimizes confusion in emergency situations. Establishing common guidelines will also enable public education campaigns regarding sirens and the overall public emergency notification system.

Scope: The outdoor warning sirens represent only one part of a broader public emergency notification system. Other components might include: NOAA All-Hazards Radio, National Weather Service, law enforcement, and the media. Sirens are used to alert citizens who are outdoors of an imminent hazard and prompt them to seek additional information on the threat (timing, location, and severity) and to seek shelter from the impending weather.

Activation

Conditions:

Siren activation recommend for:

1) Tornado Warning

- a. Issued by the National Weather Service
or
- b. Tornado or funnel cloud reported by a trained spotter (law enforcement, fire department, emergency management agency)

2) Severe Thunderstorm Warning

- a. Issued by the National Weather Service with winds 70 mph or greater forecasted or occurring.
or
- b. Issued by the National Weather Service with severe hail that could pose a threat of injury to those outside without shelter forecasted or occurring.

Warnings are officially issued by the National Weather Service and received by all 911 Communication Centers in Grant County.

National Weather Service warnings define the area threatened by the storm and include information about the history and/or potential of the specific storm. In addition, trained spotters such as law enforcement, fire, and emergency management officials may provide real-time reports of an imminent threat approaching or occurring in the community. When a warning includes the City of Platteville and the specific hazards defined above or when trained spotters report any of these hazardous conditions, sirens should be activated for the City of Platteville.

Because of technology limitations and the configuration of siren activation systems, there may be areas adjacent to the City of Platteville, but outside the official warning boundaries that are warned as a precaution. People in or near the warned areas should always seek additional information from reliable sources such as NOAA All-Hazards Radio or the local media.

Activation When activated, the tone should be sounded for 3-5 minutes, re-sounding every 15 minutes for
Duration: the duration of the threat (warning period) or until the threat has cleared the City of Platteville.

All Clear: There will NOT be an “all clear” signal from the outdoor warning sirens. People in or near the
warned area should monitor reliable sources such as NOAA All-Hazards Radio or local media to
know when the hazard threat has dissipated.

Testing: Outdoor warning sirens shall be tested on the first Wednesday of each month at 12:00 p.m.
(noon). If a severe weather watch or warning is in effect for the City of Platteville prior to 12:00
p.m. on a scheduled test day, the sirens should not be tested that day. Outdoor warning siren
tests will resume on the next scheduled monthly date.

Testing should be suspended during the winter months (November – February) when ice or sub-
zero temperatures could damage the siren system.

If testing is required at any time outside of the normal monthly testing schedule, Platteville
Police Department should make every effort to notify the media to better ensure awareness by
the public of the additional testing and hopefully reduce the number of concerned callers to the
911 Communications Centers.

Implementation: This Standard Operating Guideline has been approved by the City of Platteville Fire Chief Ryan
Simmons and City of Platteville Police Chief Doug McKinley and shall remain in effect until
withdrawn or modified by the Fire Chief and Police Chief.

Effective Date: August 15, 2018