

SIREN ACTIVATION CRITERIA

Tornado Warning:

When issued by the National Weather Service (NWS) of a TORNADO WARNING for Hamilton County, the warning sirens will be activated by the county's primary control point using the steady tone. Warnings issued by the NWS for Hamilton County are based on severe weather occurrences observed in or approaching Hamilton County.

Report of a Tornado or Funnel Cloud Sighting:

Upon confirmation of an actual sighting of a tornado with a public safety official from the jurisdiction making the report, the warning sirens will be activated using the steady tone.

Discretionary Actions:

Siren Activation Warning Area:

Sirens may be activated for the entire county or within a defined quadrant or a defined polygon if the duty officer feels that this is appropriate and can be done in a timely fashion. The siren activation warning area should be based on reliable information, such as weather radar data. The smaller warning area will be especially appropriate if the NWS warning is for the entire county, but the entire county is not affected by the storm, or if the NWS warning is for a smaller part of the county and not the entire county. This will prevent warnings for areas that are not affected by the storm.

Tornado Warning Issued by Major Market Television Stations:

Occasionally, there are tornado warnings issued by one of the major market television stations or the Weather Channel which have not been confirmed by the National Weather Service. Sirens may be activated at the discretion of the duty officer for the entire county, or for a smaller area, as defined above.

Hazardous Material Release:

Sirens may be activated at the request of the incident commander, or at the discretion of the duty officer for a specified warning area within the county. The siren activation should be accompanied by an Emergency Alert System (EAS) activation, which can only be authorized by the Sheriff or the Emergency Management Director, and use of the reverse 911 (CodeSpear) notification system.

Other Siren Activations:

On rare occasions, the siren system may be activated in order to alert the public of a dangerous condition which exists. This could include weather related issues – such as extremely high winds; very large hail, etc. or other emergencies such as terrorist threats, etc. In these cases, media outlets will be informed immediately of the reason for the siren activation. In addition, other methods of alert may be employed as well (EAS, CodeSpear, etc.)