Outdoor Warning Sirens

Outdoor warning sirens are probably the most common and widely recognized method of warning the public. They are used by communities for a variety of purposes:

- Testing (1st Tuesday of each month at 10 am)
- Severe weather
- Major hazardous materials spill
- Other warnings as needed

During emergencies, residents will hear a 3 to 5 minute steady signal of the sirens, horns or other devices. When you hear the siren and are unsure what they are sounding for, go indoors and tune your radio to one of the Emergency Alert Stations (EAS), and listen for essential emergency information:

WCSJ (103.1 FM)
WJDK (95.7 FM)
WBEQ (90.7 FM)

Do not call local fire or police agencies to ask why the sirens are sounding! If it is an emergency, they are busy getting equipment and manpower to the Emergency scene.

For more information contact:

Grundy County
Emergency
Management Agency

1320 Union Street
Morris, IL 60450
815-941-3212

Grundy County
Emergency
Management Agency

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Why is the siren sounding?

Who Owns and Maintains Sirens?

In this area, Exelon Corporation has installed and maintains outdoor warning sirens as part of its emergency preparedness obligations related to the Dresden, Braidwood and LaSalle nuclear generating stations. While Exelon is not required to do so, they have allowed for the use of their system by area counties for other emergency situations, such as weather. This is a tremendous cost savings for counties.

When are Sirens Sounded?

While there is no specific requirement to do so, most counties choose to operate outdoor warning sirens as a method to alert citizens to emergency situations, such as weather.

Grundy County will sound sirens for nuclear plant events, severe weather (when warning is available), and other emergency situations as possible. There is no guarantee that sirens will be sounded in your area for severe weather. Sometimes there is little or no warning of the severity of a storm, which means there is little or no time for sounding the sirens.

When sirens are sounded in Grundy County, turn to your local Emergency Alert Station (EAS) for information. DO NOT CALL 911!

Why Can't I Hear the Sirens in my Home?

As the term implies, outdoor warning systems are designed and intended for "outdoor" warning. While many people can hear sirens indoors, the ability to do so varies greatly based on the type of construction, whether or not doors and windows are open, etc. Outdoor audible levels also vary based upon a number of factors, such as distance from the siren, wind speed and direction, ambient noise and other factors.

Exelon's system is designed to meet strict coverage requirements mandated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). Exelon provides engineering documentation periodically to FEMA and the NRC to assure the system is providing the required outdoor audio throughout its coverage area.

It is most important to remember that outdoor sirens are for OUTDOOR notification. When you hear the siren, move in doors and tune to the local radio station for more information.

How do I Receive Warnings When I am in my House?

For indoor warning, options such as the National Weather Service's weather radio system provide one of the best choices for receiving warnings for all types of hazards. Special Weather Radio receivers are automatically activated when a severe weather warning or other emergency notice is issued. This allows you to receive a voice message with specific information about the location and type of emergency. Weather Radios are available through consumer electronics stores such as Best Buy and Radio Shack, usually for about $40 - $60. Even with the best possible outdoor warning coverage, a Weather Radio is strongly recommended so you may take advantage of all available warning systems.

If you are concerned about potential weather situations, it is best for you to stay indoors and listen to the radio or television for updates. Additionally, if you are outside and notice threatening weather – GO INSIDE AND TAKE SHELTER! DO NOT WAIT TO HEAR A SIREN OR OTHER WARNING! Storms may reach the severe weather level quickly and no warning may be available: