

Cherokee County Outdoor Warning Siren Policy

Do you know what to do when you hear an outdoor warning siren in Cherokee County? It's important to realize warning siren policies vary from county to county. Here is some important information about Cherokee County's Outdoor Warning Siren policy.

First, we only have 58 siren sites and they do not cover the entire county. Second, most homes and buildings are designed to keep sounds out, thus outdoor warning sirens are most useful for alerting people who are outside their home, in parks, or shopping areas. While outdoor sirens are an important part of the overall warning system, they should never be considered your primary means of receiving tornado warnings at home or work. ***NOAA All Hazards Radio is the best way to receive a warning and the details associated with that warning. (You may also be able to receive warnings on your cell phones.)***

Our policy calls for the activation of outdoor warning sirens under the following conditions:

1. A tornado warning is issued for Cherokee County.
2. A tornado is sighted by a trained spotter or public safety official.
3. A Severe Thunderstorm Warning is issued and within the text of the warning winds are forecast to be greater than 70 MPH.

When activated, the sirens will sound for 3 minutes. When the sirens stop it does not mean the danger is over. There is also only one tone that will be sounded. *There will be no "all clear" signal provided by the sirens.*

A great amount of study has been conducted related to all clear signals and different tones being used to signal all clear messages and the results of those studies found that using different signals is very confusing.

When a siren sounds you should move indoors to a safe structure and tune to local radio, TV or NOAA weather radio for more information. Hopefully, you can do this from your safe room. If the weather becomes threatening at your location and a warning has not been issued, don't wait to take cover.

VERY IMPORTANT: If the sirens sound for 3 minutes and then sound again a few minutes or hours later, it is not an "all clear". It means that a new threat has been detected and that you should follow the instructions above once again.

******SIREN TESTING POLICY: Sirens are tested at noon on the first Wednesday of the month when the weather is clear.******