

Outdoor Warning Sirens



When the outdoor warning sirens sound it means that you are in danger outside. You need to get to shelter and find out more about what the danger is: “Get In and Get Info!”

- The siren system is tested on the first Wednesday of every month at 1 p.m.
- The Outdoor Warning System is used mainly for severe weather but could be used for other dangers if necessary.
- For severe weather Steele County sirens are sounded for all tornado warnings issued by the National Weather Service.
- Sirens sound for three minutes and then automatically turn off to preserve their batteries. If they sound again that means there is a new danger such as a second tornado warning. Sirens are never sounded for an "all clear." You must listen to the radio or TV to find out if it is safe outside.
- The siren system uses the Attention **Alert** Signal (steady tone sound) for weather alerts. This is a three-minute steady tone sound.
- Sirens are not meant to warn or be heard by people who are already indoors. They don't tell you what the actual danger is, and the system takes longer than other alert methods, such as Wireless Emergency Alerts and NOAA All Hazards Radios. We recommend that the sirens be considered a backup warning method and that individuals rely primarily on other services like those mentioned above as their main source for warnings.
- Steele County has 31 sirens with two main siren systems, one operated by and for the [City of Owatonna](#), and one for the remainder of the county. Though each city owns its own sirens, they are activated by the [Rice & Steele 911 Center](#).