

This time of year many questions are asked about the tornado warning system utilized by the City of Martin. Frequently asked questions are:

- 1) When do we sound the sirens?
- 2) How do we know when the “coast is clear”?
- 3) Why can I not hear the sirens inside my home or business?

Answers to these questions are as follows:

- 1) The sirens are sounded when a tornado warning is issued for our area that has potential to impact the City of Martin. Typically this will occur when the National Weather Service has issued a Tornado Warning for Weakley County, when a trained weather spotter or emergency service employee has confirmed the sighting of a funnel cloud. There are times when a warning for Weakley County clearly will impact portions of the County without direct threat to the Martin area. In these instances, the decision may be made not to sound the sirens. Our intent is to provide timely warnings when severe weather is imminent in order for our citizens to depend on the system to provide “real threat” alarms and limit overuse in order not to desensitize our citizens to the siren system. When you hear the sirens, the threat is real!
- 2) The protocols for Severe Weather Warnings in our area depend on great partnerships with our local media outlets. The City of Martin Emergency Preparedness Plan designates WCMT radio 101.3 on the FM dial and 1410 on the AM dial as our primary point of contact for updating the public as to the reason for sounding the siren system. Our request is that every citizen in the City of Martin maintains access in your home and business to a working flashlight and a batter powered radio as well as a weather radio. When the warnings are sounded, you should move to the safest place inside your home or office avoiding outside walls and windows, tune in to 1410 am and listen to updates about weather or other disaster information as relevant. Thunderbolt Broadcasting and WCMT have a proven track record of providing non-stop up to the second critical information to the public during severe weather and critical incidents and professionally maintain constant contact with our communications division to provide instructions and pending threats. **THERE IS NO NEED TO CALL MPD FOR INFORMATION** during these busy times. All of the information will be made available on WCMT immediately including when the threat has passed and it is safe to resume normal routines.
- 3) It is important to remember that the tornado warning siren system was designed as an “outdoor warning system” so that those persons unprotected by structures and unaware of news through television and radio can have adequate warning to take cover in the event of a pending tornado. The fact that many persons inside buildings CAN hear the sirens is an added bonus to the system and is due in large part to the strategic placement of the 7 siren locations in the Martin area.

Working together, we can provide each other with timely information on severe weather that may impact our area. Please help us better protect our citizens by being familiar with these protocols and taking seriously the severe weather warnings when issued.

David Moore
Chief of Police
City of Martin Tennessee