

Outdoor Emergency Warning System

1. PURPOSE

This procedure is provided to establish operating procedures for the authorization and use of the City's Outdoor Warning Siren System and the Public Emergency Alert System. **For early Outdoor Warning only, system is not designed to be heard indoors.**

1. ORGANIZATION

2. The City's designated Emergency Management Coordinator shall be responsible for the development of warning procedures for severe weather such as tornadoes and other emergencies within the city.
3. Station 670 located at 200 Elm St. shall monitor weather conditions at all times and initiate warnings as outlined in this procedure.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The Outdoor Warning Siren System is provided to allow various audible alerts from a special encoder located at Station 670. Four sirens are strategically placed throughout the City to deliver outdoor warnings.
2. **DEFINITIONS**
3. Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) – Skywarn weather spotters that are organized to provide visual weather watches for Denton County.
4. National Weather Service (NWS) – Federal agency that forecasts weather and provides reports over the weather radio alarms system.
5. Radio Amateur Civil Emergencies Services (RACES) – Skywarn weather spotters that are organized to provide visual weather watches for Dallas County.
6. Skywarn – Trained volunteer weather spotters for the National Weather Service.
7. Tornado Watch – Issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are right for a tornado to form.
8. Tornado Warning – Issued by the National Weather Service when a tornado has been sighted, or tornadic activity has been indicated by radar.
9. Thunderstorm Watch or Warning – Issued by the National Weather Service when a thunderstorm is producing hail that is dime size, 0.75 inches in diameter or larger, and/or wind gusts to 50 mph or greater, and/or a tornado.
10. CodeRED (IF Available) Emergency Notification System – a telephone notification system used to call residents based on geographical location to notify them of a notification and provide them with instructions. **Code Red may not be received in a timely during a weather related emergency.**
11. **SOURCES OF SEVERE WEATHER INFORMATION**
12. It is necessary to consider the source of information when deciding what action to take. Sources of information with high credibility:
 1. National Weather Service
 2. Responding emergency service personnel (Fire and/or Police)
 3. Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) teletype
 4. Skywarn weather spotters with ARES and/or RACES
 5. Local radio and television stations
 6. Public safety personnel from other neighboring agencies (chief officers, officers, etc.)
 7. Utility company personnel (Sanger Electric or CoServ)
13. Information from private citizens may be inaccurate when describing weather conditions. Verify the caller's information with a creditable source such as those listed above before initiating a siren warning. **Do not accept and issue a warning based upon the report of an untrained individual.**
14. **WEATHER WATCH AND WARNING**
15. The Station 670 shall monitor weather conditions 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

16. When a **Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Warning** has been issued for Denton County, the Station 670 personnel shall:
 1. Page Fire Administration group (“CHIEF”) with weather information.
 2. During 0630-2200 hours, notify all full time personnel via radio or text message with “Attention all FD personnel, a severe thunderstorm watch (or warning) has been issued for Denton County effective from _____ until _____.”
17. When a **Tornado Watch** has been issued for Denton County, the Station 670 personnel shall:
 1. Page Fire Administration group (“CHIEF”) with weather information.
 2. During 0630-2200 hours, notify all full time personnel via radio or text message with “Attention all FD personnel, a tornado watch has been issued for Denton County effective from _____ until _____.”
18. When a **Tornado Warning** has been issued for Denton County, the Station 670 personnel shall:
 1. Page Fire Administration group (“CHIEF”) with weather information
 2. Use the “ALL CALL” tone to alert all full time personnel via radio or text message “Attention all FD personnel, a tornado warning has been issued for Denton County effective from _____ until _____. Possible tornado located at _____”

VII. ACTIVATING THE OUTDOOR WARNING SIREN SYSTEM AND THE PUBLIC EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

1. General Information-Outdoor Warning Siren System
 1. The City has 4 siren sites;
 1. Locations:
 1. Stephen Baker Field Parking area
 2. FM 455 @ Metz Wagon Master
 3. I-35 HWY @ McClain’s RV Park
 4. Indian Lane @ City Water Tower
 2. The sirens have three tones for warning the public (Tornado, Fire, and Attack). The warning tones starts at a low pitch and rises to a steady high pitch tone. Once activated, the sirens are programmed to sound for three minutes and should be repeated as needed.
 3. The siren controllers are located at Station 670.

1. Outdoor Warning Activation
 1. Authority to activate the outdoor warning system lies with the Emergency Management Coordinator, City Manager, or Chief Officer. Station 670 will initiate the siren activation if necessary based on the criteria listed below. **Coordination between the Station 670 and Fire Department personnel is required when the sirens are activated.**
 2. Activate the outdoor warning sirens when:
 1. The National Weather Service issues a Tornado Warning for Denton County that **MAY** impact the City of Sanger; and/or
 2. Tornado activity has been reported by a reliable source in Denton County or approaching Denton County, that **MAY** impact the City of Sanger; and/or
 3. May be operated during destructive winds or large damaging hail
 4. Hazardous Chemical Emergency
 5. Other emergencies, as deemed necessary by the Emergency Management Coordinator, Chief Officer, and City Manager’s Office or other authorized personnel.
 3. Notification of the outdoor warning system activation shall be made as soon as possible to the “All-Call” list within the CodeRED (IF Available) Emergency Notification System if the system is activated for any other reason than monthly testing. This notification shall articulate the reason for activation, identify the area at risk, and note any actions being taken in response to the emergency (i.e. shelter recommendations, evacuation, etc.).

1. NOAA All-Hazard Radio (National Weather Service)

1. For hazards other than severe weather, the NOAA All-Hazard Radio may be used as means for warning residents inside.

2. To activate the All-Hazard Radio system:

1. Contact the Texas State Operations Center (512-424-2208 or 512-424-2277). Provide them with the details of the incident and request activation of the NOAA All-Hazard radio for the City of Sanger in Denton County.

2. Once notification to the State Operations Center has taken place contact the National Weather Service Forecast Office in Fort Worth (817-831-1581) to notify them of the request. They will verify the emergency with the State Operations Center and make the activation.

VIII. TESTING OF THE OUTDOOR WARNING SIREN SYSTEM

1. The Outdoor Warning Siren System is tested (weather permitting) the third Thursday of each month at 13:30. The test will be coordinated by the Fire Department.

2. On duty Fire Department personnel shall assist in verifying the activation of the siren sites.

3. Notice for testing will be placed on the City Web site.