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Indianapolis Department of Public Safety

Emergency Warning Systems

The Emergency Management Planning Division has the primary responsibility for alerting the citizens of Marion County. Alerts are to inform the public of current or foreseen threats.

1. ***Outdoor Warning Sirens*** – Marion County has a total of 168 outdoor warning sirens. These sirens are placed strategically throughout Marion County's 372 sq miles. The purpose is to alert citizens of a potential or current threat to public safety in Indianapolis/Marion County. The alert is (3) minutes in duration. If heard, all citizens should seek specific information regarding the threat via radio or television broadcasts. Citizens who are outside should seek cover or shelter immediately.

The protocol for activating the Outdoor Warning Sirens is as follows:

- The sirens will only be activated in the **ACTUAL THREAT AREA** within Marion County as determined by the Indianapolis office of the National Weather Service.
 - When a **TORNADO WATCH AND a SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING** are issued concurrently for Marion County by the Indianapolis office of the National Weather Service.
 - When a **TORNADO WARNING** is issued for Marion County by the Indianapolis office of the National Weather Service.
 - When a public safety officer (Police, Fire, EMS) reports sighting a **FUNNEL CLOUD** (*a rotating column of wind NOT IN CONTACT with the ground*) or a **TORNADO** (*a rotating column of wind IN CONTACT with the ground*).
 - When **directed** to activate the sirens by the **Emergency Management Administrator**.

2. **Emergency Alert System (EAS)** – The EAS is used to announce specific emergency information. Many people have heard this alert system used on television and radio networks. It is in use when a loud electronic buzz is followed by the words “This is a broadcast of the Emergency Alert System”. Citizens should stay tuned to local media for further information.
3. **Special Media broadcasts** – Emergency Management will alert the media of significant events during an emergency. Television and radio media outlets will relay the information as it becomes available.
4. **NOAA Weather Radio** – The National Weather Service uses the EAS to broadcast weather advisories, watches and warnings across the nation. A NOAA weather radio is a small, battery operated radio which can be programmed to receive alerts in a specified area. They can be set at a high or low alert tone, and should be on at all times to allow for 24 hour notification.

Emergency Warning Systems Testing

A weekly test will occur at 11:00 am every Friday. The responsibility for this test will alternate between the Emergency Management Emergency Operations Center (EOC), Marion County Sheriff's Department Communications and the Indianapolis Airport EOC.