



MUSCATINE COUNTY JOINT COMMUNICATIONS PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MONTHLY OUTDOOR WARNING SIREN TEST TO BEGIN ON MONDAY

MUSCOM tests outdoor sirens at 11 a.m. on first Monday of non-freezing months

MUSCATINE, Iowa – The Muscatine County Joint Communications Center (MUSCOM) will start the yearly testing of the Outdoor Sirens on Monday, April 5, 2021. The sirens are tested at 11 a.m. on the first Monday of every month during non-freezing months. However, if there is severe weather forecast for a testing day, the sirens will not be tested.

Just as a reminder to all citizens, during a severe weather event the sirens are activated by MUSCOM when the following criteria is met:

- Tornado Warning issued by the National Weather Service (NWS)
- Tornado or funnel cloud reported by a trained weather spotter
- Severe Thunderstorm Warning issued by the NWS or a report from a trained weather spotter that includes:
 - Wind 70 mph or greater and/or
 - Golf ball sized hail or larger

According to information from the NWS most fatalities during tornadoes or severe thunderstorms occur due to falling trees or large branches. The typical threshold at which large

branches and small trees break is a 70 mph wind. Hail also begins to break windows when it reaches or exceeds golf ball sized.

“The sirens are activated based on data and warnings that we receive from the National Weather Service,” Chris Jasper, 911 Communications Manager for MUSCOM, said. “The dispatchers review the data and warnings that are sent to us and if the set criteria is met, then the sirens are activated.”

Sirens are designed to alert citizens who are outdoors of an imminent hazard and prompt them to go indoors and seek further information.

“We encourage the public to tune into local media outlets or listen to a weather radio during severe weather and ask that they limit the use of 911 to emergencies only,” Jasper said.

Muscatine County Emergency Manager Brian Wright wanted to remind everyone that the sirens are activated for the entire county and there is no separate sirens for each city or community.

"If a warning is issued for any part of Muscatine County then the sirens are activated for the entire County, it is all just one big system." he said.

There is no “all clear” from the sirens as citizens should be indoors and monitoring for additional information.

“All weather watches and warnings have an expiration date and time and this is considered the all clear,” Jasper said.

Recently, the county updated its website to include a map of the locations of the sirens. You can find that information at the following link [Muscatine County Outdoor Warning System Map](#).

Anyone that believes a siren is not working or malfunctioning can reach out to the County Emergency Manager at 563-288-3909.