

ABOUT THE HAMILTON COUNTY OUTDOOR WARNING SIREN SYSTEM



Hamilton County's Outdoor Warning Siren System is made up of approximately 190 sirens located strategically around the county. They are used to let people outdoors know that there is a dangerous situation, and they should shelter indoors immediately and seek more information.

Hamilton County EMHSA cannot guarantee that the sirens will function correctly in a disaster or will be audible indoors or in noisy areas. Because of this, the sirens should not be your only source of hazard notification. Everyone should have multiple ways to receive emergency alerts. Sign up for Alert Hamilton County (www.AlertHC.org) to receive important messages about hazards that may impact your safety. Other ways to get emergency information include a NOAA weather radio and tuning into the local media.

When are the sirens activated?

- The National Weather Service issues a Tornado Warning
- A tornado is reported by a public safety official
- A dangerous situation occurs which requires the public to seek shelter indoors immediately.

What should I do if I hear the sirens in an emergency?

Immediately seek shelter indoors. If possible, go to the lowest level of the building and shelter within the most interior room of the structure, avoiding all windows. Seek information right away: check your phone for notifications, turn on a weather radio, and tune into local media.

How long do the sirens sound in an emergency?

During a Tornado Warning, sirens will sound for three minutes straight in ten-minute intervals (three minutes on, seven minutes off) until the danger has passed. There is no "all-clear" siren.

When are the Outdoor Warning Sirens tested?

Sirens are tested on the first Wednesday of each month at 12:00 p.m. (noon) unless there is inclement weather in the area. During a test, the sirens will sound for one minute.

If there is inclement weather in Hamilton County (severe storms or extremely icy/cold), tests are rescheduled to protect siren equipment or avoid causing confusion. Rescheduled tests occur the second Wednesday of the month at 12:00 p.m. (noon) and last approximately ten seconds.

There is no need to shelter during Outdoor Warning Siren System tests.

What is a tornado?

Tornadoes are violently rotating columns of air with winds up to 200 miles per hour that extend from a thunderstorm to the ground. They are extremely dangerous and can destroy buildings, flip cars, and create deadly flying debris. They are most common in the summer months but can happen during severe weather any time of year.

The National Weather Service sends 2 types of alerts about tornadoes:

Tornado Watch

A tornado *might happen*. Weather conditions are capable of producing a tornado. Be alert and ready to take action.

Tornado Warning

A tornado *is happening*. Shelter indoors immediately.

Visit AlertHC.org to sign up to receive these alerts directly to your phone or email.