



Outdoor Warning Sirens Factsheet and FAQ's

Overview:

- The City of Roswell's / Chaves County's outdoor warning siren system was installed between 1990 and 2018.
- There are 20 sirens countywide: 14 in the City, 4 in the Dexter area, and 2 in the Hagerman area.
- The sirens are primarily used for tornado warnings, but can be used for any emergency where the public needs to quickly seek shelter.
- The sirens are tested the first Monday of every month around noon.

When the Sirens Sound

- When you hear the outdoor warning sirens, you should seek shelter and seek information.
- If you are outside, you should seek shelter indoors, preferably in a stairwell, basement, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Do not open windows.
- Once you are inside in a secure location, tune to local media (TV, radio, mobile device, etc.) or NOAA weather alert radio to be informed of the storm location, path and the duration of the warning.
- There is no "All Clear" sound that the sirens make, nor does the National Weather Service (NWS) issue an all clear message. Once the warning period has expired or is cancelled, it is safe to leave your shelter location. Be aware, however, that the NWS may extend the warning or issue a new warning at any time so remain vigilant.
- The NWS is the only official source of severe weather warnings/watches, including tornados. All tornado warnings are initiated by the NWS. However, the City /County may sound the sirens without a NWS issued warning if a tornado has been sighted by trained observers.
- During a real emergency, like a tornado warning, the sirens will sound for 3 minutes at a time. Depending on how long the warning period lasts, the sirens may be resounded multiple times throughout the warning period.

Other Alerts

- Due to evolving technology, alerts from the NWS may hit different warning devices (smartphones, TV, radio, etc.) at different times. You may receive an alert on your mobile device, hear a message on your TV/radio, or hear outdoor warning sirens at different times. You should always take protective actions at the first alert you receive. Do not wait for additional alerts before taking action.

Testing

- The sirens are tested on the first Monday of every month around noon.
- The monthly tests are only a short 30 second test of the sirens. This allows us to verify the sirens are working, without sounding them the full 3 minutes, minimizing disruptions.
- Occasionally, additional siren testing will take place at dates and times other than the first Monday of the month for sound level testing and maintenance. The Roswell/Chaves County Office of Emergency Management will issue a media release the day before this type of testing with the locations and time frame of the tests.

Outdoor Warning Sirens Factsheet and FAQ's continued:



FAQ's

What is the Outdoor Warning Siren System?

Roswell/ Chaves County has several outdoor warning sirens that are located in the City of Roswell, Dexter Area, and Hagerman Area.

The outdoor warning siren system is an effective method of outdoor notification, but the Office of Emergency Management recommends a duplication of ways to receive warnings and notifications. It is best to have more than one way to be warned of potential dangers. Warning and notification can be received by monitoring the following:

- NOAA Weather Radios
- Internet
- Countywide mass notification system (Civic Ready)
- Cell phone applications
- Local Media Outlets (television and radio)
- Sky Conditions
- Outdoor Warning Sirens

What do I do if I hear the warning sirens?

If the outdoor warning sirens are heard anytime other than the scheduled test days, seek shelter and tune in to local radio, television, or your NOAA weather radio for instructions and information. Do not call 911 to find out what the emergency is, only call if you have an actual emergency.

It is important to remember that any thunderstorm can produce a tornado with little or no warning. When a tornado warning is issued or you hear the outdoor warning sirens, take the following immediate safety precautions:

In homes or small buildings: Go to a pre-designated safe area such as the basement (if available) or to an interior room on the lowest level such as a closet or bathroom away from windows, doors, and outside walls. Upper floors are unsafe. If there is no time to descend, go to a closet, a small room with strong walls, or an inside hallway. Put as many walls between you and the outside as possible. Get under a sturdy protection (heavy table or work bench), cover yourself with some sort of thick padding, and use your arms to cover your head and neck against flying debris.

In schools, hospitals, large facilities such as shopping centers: Go to interior rooms and halls on the lowest level. Stay away from glass enclosed places or areas with wide-span roofs such as auditoriums and warehouses. Crouch down and cover your head or neck. Centrally located stairwells are good shelter.

In cars or mobile homes: ABANDON THEM IMMEDIATELY! Most deaths occur in cars and mobile homes. If you are in either of these locations, leave them and go to a substantial structure or storm shelter.

If no suitable structure is nearby: Lie flat in the nearest ditch or depression and use your hands to cover your head. Be alert for flash floods. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location. Never try to outrun a tornado.

What is the difference between a tornado watch and a tornado warning?

A **Tornado Watch** is issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are favorable for the development of tornados. This is the time to remind family members where the safest places within your home are located and listed to your radio or television for further developments.

A **Tornado Warning** is issued by the National Weather Service when a tornado has been sighted or is highly imminent based on Doppler radar information and/or trained spotter information. Take shelter immediately.

Should I be able to hear the sirens inside my home or office building?

Generally no. The sirens are loud, but are not designed to be heard indoors. If you're within a couple of blocks of a siren, you may hear them indoors, but their intent is to be heard by people outside. Air conditioning, thunder, rain, wind, and other conditions can cause the sirens not to be heard indoors. Furthermore, sirens do not provide any information concerning the type of threat or exact location of the potential danger. For this reason, if you are outdoors and hear a siren, you should seek shelter immediately.

How were siren locations chosen?

Siren locations were chosen based on several factors, the most important of which is the ability to provide optimal, uniform coverage throughout the City of Roswell, Town of Dexter, and Town of Hagerman. Other factors include proximity and height of adjacent structures, underground and overhead utilities, conforming to statutes and ordinances, and accessibility for installation and maintenance.

Where is the closest siren to my home/work/school?

See attached map of siren locations and addresses.

Do the sirens make different noises or talk?

No. The kind of electromechanical siren system we have in Chaves County only makes the loud, steady or up and down wail sound. They cannot be used as a loud speaker nor do they emit an “all clear” tone.

When is it all clear or safe to come out of sheltering?

The NWS does not issue an all clear after a tornado warning. Rather, each of their warnings carries a start and end time. So unless the warning is extended, reissued, or cancelled, it will just expire when the end time comes. Therefore, it is very important to monitor local media or the NEW to know if anything has changed. We encourage schools, office buildings, and other large facilities to have their safety personnel monitor the media, NOAA weather radio, or other reliable information and alert tenants when the warning has passed.

How else can I get alerts?

We strongly recommend that every residence, business and school use a weather alert radio with battery back-up. Weather alert radios automatically activate to warn and inform you whenever a warning is issued for Chaves County.

The outdoor warning sirens represent only one part of a broader public emergency notification system. Other components include: NOAA All Hazards Radio, mass notification system, cell phone apps, internet, and local media.

Roswell Outdoor Warning System Siren Locations:

- #1 101 W. Pine Lodge
- #2 East Berrendo and Chiquita Lane east alley
- #3 Country Club and Montana
- #4 2210 Sena Road (Briar Ridge)
- #5 1501 W. College
- #6 410 E. College between Grand Ave. and the Railroad tracks
- #7 2903 W. Fourth (Behind BLM Office)
- #8 West Second and North Wyoming south alley
- #9 513 East Hendricks and Sherman
- #10 West Poe Street north alley and South Union Avenue
- #11 330 E. Poe (Elks Pool)
- #12 401 West Brasher
- #13 #1 Martin Place RIAC
- #14 820 E. Country Club

Dexter Outdoor Warning System Siren Locations

- 400 Elford (Fire Station)
- 4 Lake Van (near pool)
- 7343 Old Dexter Highway (Greenfield Water tank)
- 200 E. Second (Fire Station)

Hagerman Outdoor Warning System Siren Locations

- 107 N. Cambridge (Public Works Yard)
- 420 E. Ottawa (Ottawa & Lavonne)