

The Town of Woodruff has a tornado warning siren at the Community Center. When activated, this siren sounds a loud and steady three-minute tone, easily distinguished from the repeating up/down wail of the fire siren.

The warning siren has provided an opportunity to signal residents and visitors in the densely developed and populated central portion of town—including boaters—that the National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning that includes the Town of Woodruff

However, a couple of changes in recent years have resulted in negative consequences:

1) The use of the tornado warning siren was expanded to include activation upon issuance of thunderstorm warnings; and 2) The testing of the siren was increased to weekly during the summer months.

It has been found that the increased frequency of the sounding the warning siren has caused:

- Inaction or hesitation resulting from uncertainty about whether the steady siren is for a test, a thunderstorm warning or a tornado warning;
- A diminished sense of urgency due to the likelihood that the steady siren is *not* for a tornado warning;
- Confusion, frustration and worse yet, complacency and indifference regarding the warning siren;
- An influx of phone calls to our emergency dispatch center and town offices seeking an explanation for why the siren is being sounded;
- Misleading signals, such as when our area is already being hit by a severe thunderstorm, a calm ensues, and then the siren sounds because an official thunderstorm warning is only then being issued (e.g.: at that point it would be logical to incorrectly assume that the siren must be for a tornado warning); use of the siren in such situations serves no positive purpose.

The Woodruff Town Board of Supervisors deems it incumbent upon them to eliminate confusion and uncertainty with respect to use of the warning siren and to promote a proper sense of urgency and need for immediate action when the siren is heard.

With this in mind, it is the intent of the Woodruff Town Board of Supervisors to instate the following warning siren policy by motion at a meeting of the Town Board on Tuesday, August 9, 2011, at 6:30 pm

Effective immediately, the steady warning siren shall only be activated:

- ***When the National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning in which the Town of Woodruff lies within the warned area;***
- ***When a tornado or funnel cloud has been sighted within the Town of Woodruff;***
- ***When a tornado or funnel cloud has been sighted in a town immediately adjacent to Woodruff and poses a threat of striking the Town of Woodruff;***
- ***When a scheduled test is taking place.***

The warning siren shall be tested on the first Wednesday of each month at 9:00 A.M. during the months of April through October, inclusive. If severe weather is forecast or observed in the area, the monthly test will be postponed until the next scheduled test to avoid confusion.

This new policy shall be effectively communicated to the community, law enforcement and emergency management officials. It is important that the public be aware of the following information:

- Monthly tests of the warning siren are conducted to test the proper activation of the siren from the dispatch center and to familiarize citizens with the sound of the steady warning siren;
- Residents and visitors are advised to seek shelter immediately when they hear the steady warning siren (with the exception of scheduled testing, of course);
- Do not call the police department or emergency services (911) to ask why the warning siren is sounding;
- Tune to television stations or weather radio for information and instructions; there is no “all clear” signal;
- The warning siren is not intended to alert people who are indoors during a warning and should not be relied upon as a primary source of severe weather notification. It is strongly recommended that each residence, business, school, camp, church, etc., purchase a weather alert radio that is automatically activated during severe weather occurrences.

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