

# Maple Grove Emergency Management Outdoor Warning Siren FAQ's



## What is the purpose of the sirens?

The sirens are to notify citizens who are out of doors that they need to seek shelter immediately and turn on their TV or radio for information.



## When are the sirens sounded?

In Maple Grove the sirens are activated for the following situations:

- Tornado activity or severe weather with sustained straight line winds in excess of 70 MPH (hurricane force) or potential for same.
- Hazardous Materials release involving a large area of the city.
  - Other emergencies as determined by the Emergency Management Director, Fire Chief or Police Chief.

## Who makes the decision to set off the sirens? and who sets off the sirens?

For weather situations, the National Weather Service in Chanhassen contacts the Hennepin County Sheriff's Communication Center who in turn activate the sirens.

## Why do the sirens go off the first Wednesday of every month at 1:00?

This is a test to insure that not only do the sirens receive the activation signal, but also are functioning properly.



Hennepin County Sheriff's  
Communication Center

## **Why can't I hear the sirens in my house or business?**

The pole mounted sirens are intended as an "outdoor" warning. Outdoor Sirens are designed to warn people who are out of doors and would not normally have a radio or TV with them.



With current construction methods and sound insulation, it is difficult to achieve sound penetration into structures. For this reason, Maple Grove Emergency Management recommends that each business and household purchase a weather alert radio.

## **Is there a volume adjustment on the sirens?**

There is not a volume adjustment on the siren; however sirens may seem louder in the fall and winter as there is less foliage to absorb the sound.

## **If the television or radio are warning of severe weather in Maple Grove and recommending to take shelter and the sirens are not sounding, what steps should I take?**

Don't wait for the sirens to sound, if you see severe weather or are warned by TV or radio to take cover, do so immediately.

## **What happens if the power fails? Will the sirens still sound?**

In most cases the siren should sound before severe weather could affect power. All sirens in Maple Grove are battery powered, these batteries are charged either by solar panels or utility power.

It is every citizen's responsibility to be aware of changing weather conditions and take proper action.

## **How much does a new siren cost?**

A new siren, including electronics to operate it, pole or other structure to mount it on, and battery backup, can cost up to \$20,000.00 per siren.



**Model 2001 Siren**

### **How are the sirens maintained?**

City personnel visit each siren several times during the year. In addition, the electronics at each siren run weekly diagnostics which generate a report for the city emergency management staff. If a problem is detected, service personnel are dispatched.



### **How many sirens are there in Maple Grove?**

Currently there are 22 sirens strategically placed throughout the city.

### **How is it decided where a siren will be placed?**

Engineering studies conducted by the city and siren manufacturers determine the location providing the best coverage of an area with the least interference by trees and land features. These studies also take into account the proximity to other sirens. Which allows for overlaps of coverage between sirens.

Priority is given to providing coverage to parks, lakes and areas where large numbers of people may congregate and may not have access to radio/ tv or other means of warning.