



NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SPIRIT LAKE, IA – A new outdoor warning siren was put to use just hours after it was installed this weekend in the Iowa Great Lakes area. The siren, located in the Moore Lake area along East Lake Okoboji, was installed by crews from Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative and Mueske Electric on Thursday, July 15. Electricians from Mueske Electric returned Saturday morning to install the electrical service which put the siren online. Local residents reported hearing this new siren Saturday night shortly after 10:00 p.m. as winds of near 100 mph were heading toward the Iowa Great Lakes area.

Michael Ehret, Dickinson County Emergency Management Coordinator: “I credit the National Weather Service’s 15+ minute lead time on their warnings, the NOAA weather radio system, the outdoor warning sirens, local media outlets and our storm spotters for the fact that despite the large number of visitors we had in the Iowa Great Lakes area this past weekend, no injuries were reported.”

The siren installed is the seventh in a multi-year project authorized by the Board of Supervisors in 2007. Other sirens have been installed in these areas of unincorporated Dickinson County: Methodist Camp and by Okoboji View Golf Course on West Lake Okoboji; Elinor Bedell State Park and Camp Foster along East Lake Okoboji; and Anglers Bay and Shore Acres on Big Spirit Lake. These sirens are in addition to the 21 sirens in the county that are owned and maintained by cities.

Dickinson County Emergency Management reminds residents of the following items concerning outdoor warning sirens:

- Like their name implies, the sirens are meant to be an **OUTDOOR** warning system. They are not meant or designed to be heard inside homes and other buildings. To be alerted when indoors, you should purchase a NOAA All-Hazards (Weather) Radio.
- The sirens are activated when a Tornado Warning has been issued for Dickinson County and/or when a tornado has been spotted by a trained spotter. In addition, sirens may be activated when very strong, damaging winds are expected to impact the area.
- When activated, the sirens will sound for approximately three minutes, then automatically shut off. Just because the sirens stop sounding does not mean that the severe weather threat has passed.
- There is **NOT** an all-clear siren. If the sirens sound again that simply means that another storm is approaching and you should remain in, or return to, your shelter.

- The sirens in Dickinson County are tested each Wednesday at noon unless there are thunderstorms within 50 miles of Dickinson County or a Tornado or Severe Thunderstorm Watch has been issued for Dickinson County. Tests are also suspended during the winter months to prevent damage to the equipment from ice and cold temperatures.

If you hear a siren, you should immediately go to your place of shelter. DO NOT CALL 911! When possible, take a battery operated NOAA weather radio or an AM/FM radio with you to monitor conditions while in your shelter. Do not leave your shelter until you hear that the warning has expired or been cancelled or when you are sure that the severe weather threat has passed by.

More information may be obtained by visiting the Dickinson County Emergency Management website at www.dcoem.org. Any questions regarding the sirens in Dickinson County may be sent to Michael Ehret, Dickinson County Emergency Management Coordinator at 336-3987 or mehret@co.dickinson.ia.us.

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