



Office of Genesee County Sheriff

Emergency Management/Homeland Security

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TO: All Local Media Stations

From: Sheriff Robert J. Pickell, Emergency Management Coordinator
Jenifer Boyer, Emergency Management Manager
Office of Genesee County Sheriff

JMB

RJP

Date: June 22, 2011

Re: Severe Weather and Genesee County SIREN Policy

In the past 24 hours multiple weather related watches and warnings have been issued for Genesee County. After receiving a few phone calls this morning, and tuning into different news stations that covered Genesee County last night during the storms, there seems to be a lot of conflicting information being shared with the community. I feel that it is imperative that all agencies involved with warning the community are on the same page regarding the warning policies and procedures for Genesee County.

Genesee County Siren Warning Information

When the National Weather Service issues a **Tornado Warning** for Genesee County, the sirens are set off every 10 minutes until the Tornado Warning expires. A Tornado Warning is issued by the National Weather Service when: a tornado has been spotted, rotation is seen on dopplar radar, local spotter information, or winds are 70 mph or greater. **A Tornado Warning means to take shelter immediately.**

Remember the sirens are designed to warn people outdoors. Anyone hearing the siren should go indoors and tune to their local TV, radio, or NOAA Weather Radio stations for specific information. Recently, the National Weather Service has the ability to issue watches and warnings for portions of counties, the sirens in Genesee County are activated across the county regardless of storm location within Genesee County.

There are over 82 free standing sirens in Genesee County. The sirens are tested the 1st Saturday of the month from March through November at 1:00 p.m. The test lasts approximately 4 minutes and begins with a wavering tone, followed by a solid blast tone. Some out-county fire departments use their fire sirens for fires, as well as, tornado warnings. Please check with your local fire department.

In order that the community can be confident in the accuracy of the information they receive during a weather alert, we must work together in disseminating the same accurate information.

Please feel free to contact me regarding any questions or concerns that you may have.