

Hughes/Stanley County Emergency Management

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Due to the severe weather that affected our communities this past Sunday morning, I would like to help clarify how Hughes County and Stanley County outdoor sirens are designed to be used. There exists a dangerous myth that outdoor sirens are designed to alert you in your home, workplace, vehicle, camper, RV, or any indoor facility that you may be in. That information is false. Emergency Management and public safety officials cannot begin to stress how dangerous and life threatening that thought process is.

Manufacturers of outdoor sirens design them for a single purpose, to be heard outdoors in several different directions. Sirens are meant to alert individuals who are outside that threatening weather or danger is approaching, directing them to move inside, seek shelter and get accurate information. Communities that have a policy of sounding their outdoor sirens for storms have a valid reason to do so, as they are alerting individuals who are outdoors that danger is imminent.

Outdoor sirens are not the primary alert method for people indoors. When severe weather strikes at night or in the early morning hours, it is important to have a NOAA weather radio in your home or a weather app on your phone to alert you and your family. Depending on the severity of the storm, the National Weather Service may send out an “Emergency Alert” message through your cell phones. This message will have the same tone as an “Amber Alert” tone and will inform you of approaching severe weather. The National Weather Service “Emergency Alert” message should lead the storm, giving you time to react and seek shelter. Take the time to ensure the wireless emergency alert feature is “ON” on your cell phone. Your local radio or television stations can also assist with up-to-date severe weather information.

Preparing for severe weather should start immediately. If a severe thunderstorm watch is issued for Hughes County or Stanley County, that is the time to activate your plan. Severe weather is very unpredictable; storms can change their paths and fluctuate in severity. Always be prepared and know what to do before a severe thunderstorm warning is issued. Being prepared is everyone’s responsibility. Check the weather before you travel or engage in any outdoor activity. For more preparedness information go to www.ready.gov. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact **Troy Blevins**, Hughes/Stanley County Emergency Management at **605.773.7454**.
