

## Warning Siren

### Understanding the Outdoor Warning Siren System

In 2004, the communities of Bedford Heights, Garfield Heights, Glenwillow, Maple Heights, Bedford, Oakwood, Walton Hills, and Warrensville Heights jointly implemented a regional emergency warning siren system.

Outdoor warning sirens warn the public that a situation exists when appropriate notification may be lifesaving. These alerts may include such events as tornadoes, chemical spills, or other hazardous situations.

**Do not call 911 unless you are personally having an emergency. Fire, Police and EMS agencies will be busy in resolution of the situation.**

#### **TORNADO WATCH OR WARNING**

The National Weather Service issues a tornado watch when conditions exist that make tornadoes possible. Citizens should remain tuned to local radio and television stations for further developments.

A tornado warning is issued when a tornado was sighted either visually or by radar. Go to a safe area immediately.

The outdoor warning sirens will be activated when the weather service issues a Tornado Warning for Cuyahoga County.

Likely conditions for a tornado are dark or greenish sky, large hail, or a loud roar similar to a freight train. Some tornadoes are clearly visible while others are obscured by rain or nearby low-hanging clouds.

Tornadoes have been known to occur at all hours of the day or night. In the average year, 800 tornadoes are reported across the United States.



#### **UPON HEARING THE WARNING SIRENS FOR A TORNADO WARNING**

A tornado can be terrifying, but try to remain calm and do the right things to protect yourself. If you are in a public place where someone is in charge, listen carefully and follow his or her instructions. Know where to go for shelter. If possible, take along a flashlight and a battery operated radio.

##### \* In cars or mobile homes:

Get out! Take shelter in the nearest ditch, ravine or culvert and cover your head with your hands.

##### \* In shopping centers or large buildings:

Look for a special sheltered area. If there is not one, go to the middle hallway on the lowest floor.

##### \* In school:

Follow the direction of a teacher and avoid places like gymnasiums or cafeterias that have large roofs.

##### \* In homes or small buildings:

Go to the basement or a place on the

Lowest floor in the middle of the house, like a bathroom, closet or interior hallway.

The sirens are designed to warn residents that are outside that there is an emergency, and they should take appropriate cover. It is advisable that you turn on a radio or television once you are inside to learn more about the emergency and what directions are issued for your best safety. The city will also try to utilize the community cable Channel BHTV23 to keep you best informed. Although you may hear the sirens inside your home or business; they are not designed to wake you up in the middle of the night or alert residents that are indoors. Weather Alert Radios with a battery backup are recommended for these situations. In the event that you hear the sirens activate, please turn to a local radio station; we suggest that it be WTAM 1100 AM or WCPN 90.3 FM or local TV stations for news or information.

### **Do's and Don'ts**

**DO** Seek shelter or leave the area depending on the emergency and instructions of emergency responders.

**DON'T** go near if there is a fire, a chemical spill or explosion at an industrial facility

**DON'T** go outside to watch the emergency responders when warned by the siren in an actual emergency.

**DON'T** approach a colored cloud or a cloud hugging the ground to find out what it is.

**DON'T** linger in the area if you smell chemical odors or if fumes in the air irritate your eyes or make you cough.

**SIREN TESTING** The first Saturday of every month the siren will be tested at noon for one minute.

**SIREN ACTIVATION** For Emergency Public Notification - the Regional outdoor warning sirens will be activated for 3 minutes to notify the public of an emergency. Take cover and consult the media as advised for further direction.

### **UPON HEARING THE WARNING SIRENS FOR A HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ALERT**

- Move inside a building.
  - Turn on the radio (WTAM 1100 AM or WCPN 90.3 FM) or local TV and wait for further instructions.
  - Close and lock all windows and doors.
  - Turn off all ventilation systems if possible (Extinguish fireplace fires, then shut the flue).
  - Stay off the phone lines unless there is an emergency.
- Informational Brochure: Understanding the Outdoor Warning Siren System for Bedford, Bedford Heights, Garfield Heights, Glenwillow, Maple Heights, Oakwood, Walton Hills and Warrensville Heights. (2004)