



**CITY OF BURNSVILLE, MINNESOTA
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

100 Civic Center Parkway
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337
952-895-4600 • Fax 952-895-4640
www.burnsville.org/police

Eric Gieseke
Chief of Police



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 2, 2015

Contact: Sgt. Don Stenger
Burnsville Police Department
O# 952-895-4638
don.stenger@burnsvillemn.gov

SEVERE WEATHER SIRENS TO BE USED LESS WITH NEW POLICY
TWO STATEWIDE TORNADO DRILLS SCHEDULED DURING
SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK APRIL 13-17

Beginning in January 2015, Dakota County and City emergency managers – with a recommendation from the National Weather Service – implemented a new policy regarding when severe weather sirens are activated in Dakota County.

In the past, outdoor warning sirens were activated for all tornado and severe thunderstorm warnings. The new policy continues to activate sirens during all tornado warnings, but will only sound sirens for severe thunderstorms where winds are forecasted to reach a sustained speed of 70 mph or greater.

Using historical data, this new policy should equate to approximately a 75 percent reduction in siren activations. It also means that if sirens sound now, a truly serious storm is approaching Burnsville and residents should immediately seek shelter.

All other outdoor warning siren procedures will remain the same. Sirens will continue to be activated by the Dakota Communications Center located in Empire Township. When the National Weather Service issues warnings, the center will sound sirens only for the cities in the warning area. Local police and fire can also call to have the sirens activated if they feel it is in the best interest of public safety, such as if they see a funnel cloud when no warnings are issued.

April 13-17 is Severe Weather Awareness Week

While residents may hear fewer outdoor warning sirens, their reaction should remain the same. Each year, thunderstorms, hail and straight-line winds cause extensive damage in Minnesota and the U.S.

When sirens sound – or the weather looks ominous – residents are asked to go inside and get more information from their television, internet, radio or smartphone and take appropriate action.

During Minnesota Severe Weather Awareness Week April 13-17, individuals, families, businesses and schools are also encouraged to create/update emergency plans, and practice an emergency drill.

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety will be conducting two statewide tornado drills. **Severe weather sirens will be activated at 1:45 p.m. and 6:55 p.m. on Thursday, April 16 in Burnsville and neighboring communities.**

(more)

As part of Severe Weather Awareness Week, residents are also encouraged to purchase a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio, and sign up for personal weather alerts from The National Weather Service or other local outlets. These timely notifications allow people to obtain severe weather information as it takes place.

For more information contact Emergency Management Coordinator Don Stenger at 952-895-4638, visit <http://weatherawareness.dps.mn.gov> or www.burnsville.org/severeweather.

#