



Methods to Receive Weather Warning Information

When disaster strikes, you may have only a short time to make what might be a life or death decision. One of the most important things you can do is to be aware that a danger is present. Most of the injuries and deaths happen to people who are unaware or uninformed. For this reason, **it is crucial that you have multiple ways to receive warning information.**

- Television and Radio stations are a vital component of our warning system. Local television and radio stations routinely broadcast official "Watches" and "Warnings" issued by the National Weather Service as well as forecasts and storm tracks developed by on-air meteorologists. Television, in particular, is an excellent source of emergency information since graphics such as radar displays and maps can be used to describe the event in detail. Broadcast television and radio, while being an excellent source of information, have one major disadvantage as a means of receiving warning. Your radio or television has to be on and you have to be able to hear it or see it. If the TV or radio is not on or you are in another room, you will probably miss the warning. For this reason, you should not rely on broadcast television or radio as your sole source of emergency warning.
- Emergency Notification Via Mobile Device

Imagine this: You're driving down the highway, humming along to your favorite tunes, when the cell phone stowed in your bag suddenly makes a strange noise. To investigate, you take the next exit and safely pull over to check the screen. Good thing you did: Your phone just alerted you to a tornado a few miles away in same county you're driving through.

Sound plausible? It is. America's wireless industry is helping to build a Weather-Ready Nation through a nationwide text emergency alert system, called Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), which will warn you when weather threatens. To learn more about WEA visit <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/wea.html>



- NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service office. NWR can provide an important battery back up source of weather warnings when power is out and at night when you may be sleeping. To learn more visit <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/>

- Outdoor Sirens are designed to alert individuals who are outdoors. Sirens are not intended to alert people who are in cars, homes, or other buildings. Hearing sirens indoors may have been possible in the past, however, this should no longer be expected. Energy conservation practices and better insulation have effectively reduced the sound penetration into these areas. They are an outdoor alerting device and should be used as such.





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Summary

The warning system can only be effective if you understand the benefits and limitations of the alerting methods available. There are a great deal of warning devices and methods available to you. We recommend that you take advantage of as many of them as possible. No one warning method is perfect and no one warning method can be guaranteed never to fail. By relying on one single method, such as the sounding of the sirens or the receiving information solely from broadcast meteorologists, you risk missing a warning if that system fails. By taking a systematic approach and getting information from more than one source, you are much more likely to receive the warning, even if there is a failure in one of the components.

We strongly recommend that you consider the following:

- Purchase a weather alert radio if you don't already have one.
- Rely on Wireless Emergency Alerts on your phone as one method of warning reception. You can also subscribe to a calling service or SMS text based alerting system if you carry a mobile device.
- Rely on the sirens only for as a means of outdoor alert. If you hear them, seek out additional information as soon as possible.
- Turn to broadcast radio or television for critical details and follow-up information.

Let's all do our part to be as prepared and aware as we can as we head through the severe weather Season!

