



East Grand Forks Fire Department

Jeff Boushee Fire Chief/Emergency Manager

The City of East Grand Forks maintains four (4) warning sirens located throughout the community to notify residents who are outdoors of a tornado warning, or of a possible severe weather event. These sirens are a proven method to warn people at ball games, in their yards, or elsewhere who are not in contact with a radio or television. It is important to understand what situations sirens would be activated, and what immediate actions must be taken for your safety.

“Get inside then get information”

East Grand Forks Warning Sirens can be found at the following locations:

1. 3rd Ave. NW & Pioneer Ct. NW
2. 1010 5th Ave. NE
3. James Ave. & 4th St. SE
4. 1827 Bygland Rd. SE



Frequently Asked Questions

- Who activates the sirens?
 - Sirens can be activated by the East Grand Forks Fire Department.
 - Sirens can be activated by the East Grand Forks Police Department
 - Sirens can also be activated by the Polk County Dispatch (911)
- With regard to weather, why would the sirens be activated?
 - A Tornado Warning issued by the NWS, including the city of East Grand Forks.
 - Tornado or Funnel cloud spotted within 20 miles of the city.
 - A Severe Thunderstorm Warning **WITH** warned winds of 70 mph or greater approaching East Grand Forks.
- What should I do when the sirens are activated
 - Get inside then get information
- What does it mean when a siren is activated?
 - The sirens sound when it is not safe to be outside. When you hear the siren go off, get inside, take shelter, and if possible, turn on a radio or TV for more information.
- Why can't I hear the siren in my house?
 - Sirens are designed to be outdoor warning systems. Many individuals can hear sirens in their homes, but that is not their intended purpose. Sirens are only one part of the warning systems used to alert citizens. Weather radio's, which are better suited to indoor warning, are also part of the warning systems used to alert citizens. Most new weather radios have the capability to alert citizens inside their homes about dangerous situations through an alarm function.

- When are sirens tested?
 - The warning sirens are tested on the 1st Wednesday of every month at 1:00 p.m.
- Is there an “All Clear” signal?
 - There is no all clear sounding for the siren system. If sirens are activated again it is generally because of a new threat or a new warning has been issued. When the sirens sound for a second time, it does not mean it is safe to come out of the shelter areas.
- Why are the sirens activated for Severe Thunderstorm Warnings with warned winds equal to or in excess of 70 mph?
 - Winds of 70 mph are the equivalent to:
 - EF 0 Tornado
 - Strong Tropical Storm or Class 1 Hurricane
 - In response to straight line winds during a summer storm where sirens were not activated and several people were injured or killed by damage from winds.
 - There is a significant and real danger to life and property when winds reach approximately 70 mph.
- Do we have designated storm shelters in East Grand Forks?
 - Yes, the city of East Grand Forks opens 3 storm shelters at the following locations.
 - Civic Center – 300 15th St NE (East Entrance)
 - VFW Arena – 711 3rd St SE (West Entrance)
 - Fire Department – 415 4th St. NW
- How can I get information once I am inside?
 - AM/FM Radio
 - Television
 - NOAA Weather Radio
 - National Weather Service www.weather.gov
 - Sign up for Polk County Emergency Alert Program. This system provides you with critical information quickly in a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods. You will receive time-sensitive messages wherever you specify, such as your home, mobile or business phones, email address, text messages and more. You pick where, you pick how.
Sign up at the Polk County Web Site; <https://www.co.polk.mn.us/>