

METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY



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METRO TO EXPAND, UPGRADE TORNADO WARNING SIREN SYSTEM *20 New Sirens, Plus a New Sound*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Metro Government is expanding and upgrading its Tornado Warning Siren System by adding 20 new sirens and changing the sound of all the sirens. The number of siren sites will increase from 73 to 93 across Davidson County, and the sound of all the sirens will change from its current electronic tones to a mechanically generated tone similar in sound to an old-fashioned air-raid warning, which will be easier to hear and will travel farther.

Construction of the new sites and upgrading of the system is set to begin in late February. Installation of the 20 new siren locations is expected to be completed by March 7. The upgrade of the existing system is estimated for completion by the end of April. With the approach of the spring severe weather season, the entire system will continue to remain in operation at all times, if needed.

“This improved and expanded weather siren system will help keep Davidson County residents safe during tornado season,” Mayor Karl Dean said. “Sirens are crucial to alert people outdoors that they need to take cover. Most importantly, we want everyone to be aware of the new sound the system will use, which will reach farther and should be easier for people to hear.”

In 2002, Metro received grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to build an Outdoor Weather Warning Siren System. The grant specified the individual siren locations be based on the 2000 Census data and outdoor population expectations. The 2013 upgrade of the system combines the same methodology and the latest 2010 Census data to recommend new locations, as the system is expanded to cover additional areas of the county. A list of the locations for the new and existing sites is attached to this release. As with the present siren locations, the new sites were identified, selected and recommended by the Metropolitan Planning Commission staff.

The purpose of the tornado warning siren system is to provide emergency weather alerts to those in outdoor settings when a tornado warning had been issued anywhere in Davidson County. It is not a substitute for people utilizing a home weather radio or monitoring local media coverage of severe weather. As in the past, the entire system will be activated and will repeat the siren warnings for three minutes every 10 minutes whenever a tornado warning is issued in any part of Davidson County by the National Weather Service.

The estimated cost of the system expansion and upgrade is \$2 million, with funds coming from a capital bond program proposed by Mayor Dean and approved by the Metro Council in 2012.

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