

RESOLUTION NO. RS2018-1037

A resolution requesting that the Office of Emergency Management determine the feasibility of upgrading Outdoor Early Warning Sirens, study options for siren activation, and present a report to the Metropolitan Council regarding such upgrades.

WHEREAS, Nashville-Davidson County, through the Office of Emergency Management, operates 93 Outdoor Early Warning Sirens ("tornado sirens") located throughout Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, Director Chief William Swann and his team at the Office of Emergency Management dedicate themselves to protecting the safety of individuals in Nashville when emergencies occur; and

WHEREAS, tornado sirens, used in combination with other tools, are intended to protect residents from death and injury; and

WHEREAS, best practices call for tornado sirens to sound only in or near areas under threat; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Emergency Management currently activates all 93 sirens, regardless of how much or which portion of Nashville-Davidson County is under threat; and

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service in 2007 evolved from countywide tornado warnings to polygon-based tornado warnings; and

WHEREAS, municipalities of varying sizes have upgraded their tornado sirens to only activate in or near areas under threat; and

WHEREAS, the after-action report on the Joplin, Missouri, tornado that killed 158 people stated that "the perceived frequency of siren activation in Joplin led the majority of survey participants to become desensitized or complacent to this method of warning"; and

WHEREAS, many residents of Nashville-Davidson County no longer pay heed to tornado sirens due to the frequency of activation; and

WHEREAS, this issue is especially acute in Nashville-Davidson County, which is 526 square miles in area, larger than Atlanta, Birmingham, San Francisco, Seattle, and St. Louis combined; and

WHEREAS, resolving these deficiencies could be important to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens and residents of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. That the Metropolitan Council goes on record as requesting that the Office of Emergency Management determine the feasibility of upgrading Outdoor Early Warning Sirens operating within Nashville-Davidson County.

Section 2. That the Metropolitan Council further goes on record as requesting that the Office of Emergency Management study options including, but not limited to, activating specific individual sirens.

Section 3. That the Metropolitan Council further goes on record as requesting that the Office of Emergency Management present a report to the Metropolitan Council including costs, software modifications, equipment modifications, training, and other needs for such upgrades within sixty (60) days from the date of adoption of this Resolution.

Section 4. That the Metropolitan Clerk be instructed to send a copy of this Resolution to Director Chief William Swann of the Nashville Fire Department upon its adoption.

Section 5. That this Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

INTRODUCED BY:

Dave Rosenberg
Member of Council