



# Office of the Washington County Sheriff

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Dan Starry, County Sheriff  
Douglas Anschutz, Chief Deputy

## Press Release

**Contact:** Doug Berglund, Emergency Mgmt. Director  
**Phone:** 651-430-7682

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Date:** April 17, 2023

### **Washington County Supports National Severe Weather Awareness Week** *Tornado Drill is Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023*

WASHINGTON COUNTY, Minn. — Because severe weather can threaten the lives and property of Minnesotans at any time, April 17-21 is designated as Severe Weather Awareness Week. This week is intended to increase awareness and education about steps individuals, businesses, and families can take to better prepare for emergencies. Washington County will mark this week by participating in the Statewide Tornado Drill on Thursday, April 20th.

The outdoor warning sirens are activated by geographic areas in Washington County. Washington County is split into two areas - "north" and "south." Washington County has three activation scenarios: All County, North Area, and South Area depending upon the location of a severe weather incident. The National Weather Service determines which areas of the county are affected by a warning and notifies the Washington County Sheriff's Office 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Response Center as such, (please note that some cities chose to have sirens activated in north and south zones). The north zone includes all sirens located north of I94 and the south zone includes all sirens located south of Highway 96.

The outdoor warning sirens in Washington County are only designed to be heard by people outside of buildings. Washington County urges residents to research other alert methods such as cell phone capabilities and use NOAA weather radios for their homes and places of business. The National Weather Service's website has information on radio types and models, how to program them and where to buy a NOAA weather radio. The following link will take you to the National Weather Service website that discusses weather radios: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/>

Washington County partners with the Minnesota Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) and the National Weather Service to promote severe weather preparedness. For information specific to Washington County, see the Emergency Management website <http://www.co.washington.mn.us/3387/Emergency-Management> under "Severe Weather Awareness" to view helpful information such as a map of the outdoor warning sirens throughout the county. Washington County will also be posting daily information on the Washington County Sheriff's Office Facebook page.



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Severe Weather Awareness Week Daily Topics on the Washington County website:

**Monday** – Alerts and Warnings

**Tuesday** – Severe Weather, Lightning and Hail

**Wednesday** – Floods

**Thursday** – Statewide tornado drill day – *Please see below for more information.*

- For more information about the outdoor warning sirens in Washington County, visit the Washington County Emergency Management website.
- 1:45 p.m. – The National Weather Service will issue a simulated tornado warning for Minnesota counties. Businesses, schools and local and state agencies are encouraged to use this warning as a time to review emergency procedures while taking into account COVID-19 precautions.
- 6:45 p.m. The National Weather Service will issue a second simulated tornado warning. The second drill is issued to allow families to practice their emergency plan at home or second shift workers to review emergency procedures while taking into account COVID-19 precautions.

**Friday** – Extreme Heat

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