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For Immediate Release

December 5, 2022

Linn County Emergency Management Announces Improvements to the Outdoor Warning Siren System

LINN COUNTY, IA – December 5, 2022 – Linn County Emergency Management Agency is pleased to announce the installation of seven outdoor warning sirens at additional locations throughout rural Linn County, Iowa.

The seven locations are:

- Palisades Kepler State Park
- Intersection of Bertram Rd and Berry Rd
- Intersection of Campbell Rd and Secrist Rd
- Intersection of Prairie Chapel Rd and Stone City Rd
- Matsell Bridge Park
- Boy Scout Rd south of the Howard H. Cherry Scout Reservation
- Wapsie Y Rd directly across from the main entrance to YMCA Camp Wapsie

In addition to these seven new sirens, as part of a countywide siren system initiative, Linn County Emergency Management Agency will be accepting responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the outdoor warning sirens within Walford, Fairfax, and Ely.

Siren Testing

As part of Linn County's Outdoor Warning Siren System, all sirens are tested monthly, with the test taking place on the first Wednesday of the month at 8:45 a.m. The test consists of a computer-generated voice announcement, "This is a test. There is no emergency". Followed by an audible, short up and down wailing and a steady wailing alert.

Siren Activation Criteria

Outside of the regularly scheduled monthly testing, sirens are used to alert Linn County residents and visitors of severe weather conditions. The siren activation criteria Linn County Emergency Management Agency follows is a statewide standard of best practices. Siren activation criteria is as follows:

- Confirmed winds over 70 mph or higher
- Hail 1.75 inches (golf ball size) or larger
- Tornado Warning issued by the National Weather Service
- Tornado or funnel cloud reported by a trained weather spotter

The activation of the Outdoor Warning Siren System is intended to notify individuals who are outdoors, where other means of notification may not be available, of severe weather conditions. When the outdoor warning sirens are activated, individuals are encouraged to take shelter inside and seek further information. Individuals already inside when the sirens are activated will not necessarily hear the outdoor warning sirens as they are not designed to be heard indoors.

The siren system is monitored by two 24-hour emergency dispatch centers ensuring prompt activation for severe weather events. Linn County Emergency Management Agency will provide maintenance services through their in-house, Siren Maintenance Division for upkeep and programming requirements as necessary. Funding for siren maintenance is allocated by the Linn County Board of Supervisors.

Linn County Emergency Management Agency also encourages residents to sign up for Alert Iowa, the State of Iowa's official emergency notification system. Through Alert Iowa, local officials use a single, statewide notification system that provides local control of how and when to disseminate emergency and public safety messages to residents. Residents can learn more about the system and sign up for alerts on the Iowa Department of Homeland Security website: <https://homelandsecurity.iowa.gov/alert-iowa/>.

If you have any questions regarding the operation of the Outdoor Warning Siren System within your community, please contact the Linn County Emergency Management Agency at 319-892-6500.

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