



SEVERE WEATHER AWARENESS WEEK

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MINNESOTA TORNADO DRILL DAY THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2021

Each year, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety (in partnership with the National Weather Service and other state and local government agencies) sponsors [Severe Weather Awareness Week](#). Each day of the week focuses on a different topic. The highlight are two statewide tornado drills on Thursday.

Siren and NOAA Weather Radio Activation

During the afternoon and evening drills, local sirens and all NOAA Weather Radios in Minnesota and Wisconsin will sound with a simulated tornado warning. These drills give everyone the opportunity to review their emergency plans and procedures and practice emergency drills at work or at home.

Remember - counties and cities in Minnesota own, operate and maintain all local warning sirens, and set their own policies on how and when they are activated. [Please check with your local public safety officials for details on when warning sirens are sounded in your community](#). Note: There is no such thing as an all-clear siren.



Most local and statewide radio, TV and cable stations will be participating. The tornado drill warning should last about one minute. When the test is completed, stations should return to normal programming.

The Drills

The first drill occurs on Thursday, April 15 at 1:45 p.m., when jurisdictions across Minnesota sound their outdoor warning sirens. Schools, businesses and other facilities are encouraged to conduct a tornado drill at this time to practice their emergency tornado sheltering plans.

A second drill occurs on Thursday, April 15 at 6:45 p.m., when jurisdictions across Minnesota sound their outdoor warning sirens. This second drill allows second-shift workers, individuals and families the opportunity to practice their own emergency plans at home.

Schedule of Events

Simulated tornado watches and warnings will be issued to test the statewide warning and communications systems. The schedule is as follows:

1:00 p.m.: All National Weather Service offices that serve Minnesota will issue a simulated tornado watch. NOAA Weather Radios will activate with the real TOR code.

1:45 p.m.: The National Weather Service will issue a simulated tornado warning for Minnesota counties. Note that most cities and counties will activate outdoor warning siren systems. NOAA Weather Radios will activate with the real TOR code.

2:00 p.m.: The National Weather Service will issue an "End of Test" message using the Severe Weather Statement product. There will be no alarm on NOAA Weather Radios.

6:45 p.m.: National Weather Service offices will issue another simulated tornado warning. NOAA Weather Radios will activate with the real TOR code.

7:00 p.m.: The National Weather Service will issue an "End of Test" message using the Severe Weather Statement product. There will be no alarm on NOAA Weather Radios.



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Effect on Radio, TV and Wireless Emergency Alerts

These simulated tornado warnings are transmitted with a test code that is flagged by the wireless alert warning systems. Wireless emergency alerts on cell phones should not sound for these drills.

In general, software at TV stations also receives the test code indicating a test, and may not send a message. However, if radio/TV/cable uses the NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) as the input signal to their emergency broadcast system equipment, then the NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts will be heard. The audio announcement will mention "test" several times. For specific details, please check with your local broadcast station or cable service provider.

Postponement or Cancellation

If real severe weather is a significant threat on or before the drill day, any of the National Weather Service offices that serve Minnesota may postpone the simulated watch and warning to Friday.

If the weather threat continues, the drills may be canceled. Any postponement or cancellation will be announced.

How to Participate

[Read this fact sheet](#) for ideas on how you can participate in Severe Weather Awareness Week and the statewide tornado drills.