



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Date: June 21, 2023

To: All Media Outlets for Public Dissemination

From: Captain Jonathan Jacobson, Olmsted County Emergency Management Director

Re: Media Release - Change in Outdoor Warning Siren Testing Schedule

Effective July 1, 2023, Olmsted County Emergency Management will be changing the Summer testing schedule for the Outdoor Warning Siren System (OWSS). The new schedule will be as follows:

Summer (April 1 – October 31)

- Full 3-minute test on the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00am
- “Quiet” test every Wednesday thereafter at 10:00am. During the “Quiet” test, the siren head will rotate, and a low growl will be audible for 5-10 seconds
- Additional testing will be completed per State of Minnesota guidelines during Severe Weather Awareness week, usually in April of each year

Winter (November 1 – March 31) – no change

- 1-minute test on the first Wednesday of each month at 10:00am as long as the temperature is above zero degrees (Fahrenheit)
- “Quiet” tests every Wednesday thereafter at 10:00am

The changes in the testing schedule are representative of the Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers (AMEM) recommendations, which were adopted statewide in April 2023. Although AMEM’s recommended time of the test is 1:00pm, Olmsted County, and all cities within it, agree the likelihood for severe weather is more prominent at 1:00pm versus at 10:00am and will cause less interference for the reduced Summer full testing schedule.

Olmsted County Emergency Management maintains three (3) thresholds for activating the OWSS:

- RADAR indicated tornado or confirmed tornado sighting by a trained and registered SkyWarn Storm Spotter
- Hail of 2 inches or greater in diameter (RADAR indicated or SkyWarn Spotter report)
- Winds of 70+ MPH

If you are outside when you hear the Outdoor Warning Siren System activate, immediately seek shelter in the lowest level or interior room of a sturdy building and seek further weather information via radio, television, or a trusted weather application on your smartphone. GET IN AND TUNE IN!

For more information about Outdoor Warning Siren Systems, please visit
[National Weather Service Outdoor Warning Siren Information](#)