

The Clare County Office of Emergency Services & Homeland Security Division

Outdoor Warning Sirens: In 2006 Clare County Emergency Management obtained a federal grant for just over \$168,000, which purchased a total of (11) Electronic Rotating Sirens. These were installed at various locations in partnership with the receiving jurisdictions. At that time those sirens were granted over to the Townships/Cities/Villages for ongoing maintenance and sustainability.

Since 2006 There have been additional sirens added by local jurisdictions, (3) some of which are older style Mechanical sirens.

The sirens all have radio receivers that receive a radio RF signal from Clare County Central Dispatch along with Backup capability at Garfield Twp. And Clare Fire & Police Stations. The electronic versions operate solely on batteries which require periodic replacement, the mechanical versions operate solely off the power grid, Due to the fact they require high voltage to function. **Note: About a decade ago FEMA removed Outdoor Warning Sirens from the list of grant purchasable items.** The good and bad of Outdoor Warning Sirens.

The Good:

- If you live within the 1 - 2-mile est. range of one and your outdoors you will probably hear it, if it's activated.
- They are locally controlled no matter what the emergency, I.E. Weather/Chemical Spill/Attack etc. Local control can trip them whenever needed.

The Bad:

- Require electrical power of some type to operate.
- Require maintenance, Batteries, Updated Electronics, and Repairs.
- When they fail to operate, they fail to operate, and we have no idea unless someone is monitoring them onsite during our monthly tests to inform they need attention.
- If grid power fails it will impact the operation of the sirens, either by batteries running dead on the electronic units or total failure of the mechanical sirens that require grid power.
- The range is limited typically to 1-2miles under ideal conditions and they are not designed to warn inside buildings, the reason they are call Outdoor Warning Sirens.
- Require a radio RF signal to reach them to activate.

Here is the list of recommended public warning methods in order:

1. Cell Phone/Wireless tablet Laptop/Watch w/ WEA (Wireless Emergency Alerts) Enabled within the device, and backup downloaded weather app/s. Sign up for local information on your devices at; www.smart911.com
2. NOAA Weather Radio/ Programmed to local systems and alerts, (Available Online or in many stores), Note: Clare County secured a \$16,000 grant in 2023 from TransCanada and distributed hundreds of these, via townships and other groups, and through EMHSD office.
3. Local Broadcasting, Radio/TV/Internet services.
4. Outdoor warning sirens.