

## 222. SEVERE STORM AND TORNADO WARNING PROCEDURES



### **RICHFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY**

Effective Date: 06/01/92  
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Authority: Chief Jay Henthorne

*NOTE: This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It should not be construed as the creation of a higher standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party claims. Violations of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this Department, and then only in a non-judicial administrative setting.*

### **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy is to outline the Department notification and warning procedures to be followed when the National Weather Service issues a severe thunderstorm or tornado warning.

### **II. POLICY**

When a severe weather warning is issued by the National Weather Service, the Police Department will make a reasonable effort to notify its employees of the warning. Department employees should take reasonable precautions to ensure their safety to the extent their duties permit.

### **III. PROCEDURE**

#### **NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES**

When a severe weather warning is issued for Richfield, a preplanned notification process must be initiated to warn city employees. If the first indication of a warning is the sounding of the sirens, the dispatcher should verify the warning by monitoring the METCOM the state computer terminal or the local weather on television.

It is the responsibility of the dispatcher to verify the warning or to request immediate assistance to verify it. Once a warning is verified, the dispatcher should broadcast the warning information over the Police and Fire Main talk-groups and the car to car talk-group.

If the warning occurs during business hours (0800 – 1700 hours), one of the records section personnel should notify the departments listed below (after business hours it is not necessary to initiate these notifications.):

- 1) Recreation Services
- 2) Public Works
- 3) Administrative Services
- 4) Community Development

Notify each Department of the warning and direct them to initiate their internal notification procedures. After these calls have been made, announce the warning over the Public Safety intercom and direct employees to take shelter. Once all calls and announcements have been made, records section personnel should take cover in the basement. Persons waiting in the Public Safety Lobby should be informed of the warning and escorted downstairs for shelter.

If sirens are heard by field personnel and there is no announcement over the radio verifying a warning, dispatch should be notified. Sirens are occasionally set off by accident. In such a case, an attempt should be made to identify the siren(s) that is sounding. A map of siren locations is on RPDNet. That information should then be relayed to Hennepin County Radio at so they can transmit a stop command to the radio control unit.

If this fails, the power to the siren can be shut off manually at the pole. The power switch is located on the outside of the fuse box on some sirens, and inside the power box on others. The power box is the box that is not silver (the silver box is for the radio controller). A key for the switch padlock is on the key box in the sergeants' office. A ladder will be needed to reach the power box. Contact the Emergency Management Coordinator or Public Works if you need assistance


**TORNADO SIGHTINGS**

In the event a funnel cloud is sighted, the report should be radioed to dispatch along with location and direction of travel. If a tornado warning has not been issued or the outdoor warning sirens have not sounded, the dispatcher should contact Hennepin County Radio or over METCOM advising them of the sighting and requesting activation of Richfield's sirens.

**SHELTER**

All areas in the basement of the Public Safety side of City Hall provide good shelter from severe storms (Shelter locations are listed on RPDNet).

By Order Of:

  
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Chief of Police

