



**Douglas County  
Emergency Management Agency**

Paul W. Johnson, Director

February 23, 2009

**To Our Community Partners in Severe Weather Awareness:**

Our severe weather season for Omaha and Douglas County will soon be upon us. As a community partner in severe weather awareness and education, we want to inform you of an upcoming event and a new change in the testing of our outdoor warning siren system.

Severe Weather Awareness Week is held each Spring and is sponsored and organized by the National Weather Service. During Severe Weather Awareness Week a public education effort is launched where citizens are reminded of the actions to take when they hear outdoor warning sirens being sounded during periods of severe weather. Citizens are also reminded of the importance of having their own severe weather procedures in place at home and at their place of work.

This year, Severe Weather Awareness Week for eastern Nebraska and western Iowa will be held during the week of April 6 through April 11, 2009. This will mean that public service announcements, professional meteorologists and interviews with other weather professionals regarding severe weather awareness will likely be heard on the local media during this week.

On April 8, 2009, a simulated tornado watch will be issued at 9:50 AM by the National Weather Service followed by a simulated tornado warning at 10:10 AM. Upon receiving the simulated tornado warning the outdoor warning sirens will be sounded in Douglas County for 3 minutes. Businesses, schools and other entities can use this simulated tornado warning sequence to practice their severe weather emergency procedures.

On the following Saturday, April 11, 2009 at 10:00 AM, the annual visual siren test will take place in Douglas County. During the visual test, the Douglas County Emergency Management Agency will assign trained observers to collect data regarding the functionality of each siren. This test will involve multiple siren soundings, each 3 minutes in length. Usually, three or four soundings of the entire siren system are required to complete the testing. Testing is usually completed by noon.

**There is a new change that will take place in 2009 and every year thereafter. The regularly scheduled monthly test of the outdoor warning siren system will occur on the first Wednesday of every month beginning May 6, 2009, at 11:00 AM in Douglas County. As before, the test will last approximately 3 minutes in length. This testing frequency replaces the monthly outdoor siren test that was previously scheduled and conducted in prior years on the first Saturday of the month at 10:00 AM.**

No testing will occur if threatening weather exists. If threatening weather occurs on the first Wednesday of the month at 11:00 AM, the test will be delayed two hours until 1:00 PM. If the threatening weather still prevails at 1:00 PM, the test will be rescheduled for the following Wednesday at 11:00 AM.

Again, we thank you for all your efforts in educating the citizens of Douglas County and their children regarding the precautions to be followed during severe weather. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Johnson, Director  
Douglas County Emergency Management Agency