

Severe Weather

The City of Stillwater Office of Emergency Management is committed to the safety and wellbeing of Stillwater's residents and visitors during severe weather. We use every available option to inform people of potentially life-threatening situations, which often arise quickly, allowing us limited time to alert the community of impending dangers to life and property. However, it's ultimately your responsibility to ensure your personal safety.

Our Stillwater First Philosophy

When Oklahoma City and Tulsa news stations report about storms, their primary concern is for the safety of residents in their metro areas. Stillwater Emergency Management's only concern is alerting Stillwater residents and visitors about life-threatening situations *in* Stillwater, so everyone (including vulnerable populations) has time to get to safety.

Vulnerable populations are groups of people who need extra time to get to safety. This includes people who generally don't rely on smartphones or tablets for weather updates. Examples include the following:

- Hospitals
- Outpatient Surgery Centers
- Disability Living Facilities (Group Homes)
- Elderly population
- Nursing Homes/Assisted Living Facilities
- Dialysis Services
- Schools/Daycares
- Campers and visitors at recreational parks

How We Communicate During Severe Weather

During severe weather events, we communicate using the following systems. We also highly recommend everyone have a NOAA weather radio, which is the equivalent of smoke detectors for the weather. When the weather radio's alarm goes off, it's your signal that there's dangerous weather approaching.

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How We Communicate During Severe Weather

1. OUTDOOR WARNING SYSTEMS

Outdoor Storm Sirens

Emergency Management activates the outdoor warning system the first Tuesday of every month for routine maintenance and testing of the system. When activated during severe weather, sirens mean TAKE COVER NOW. Sirens are not intended to be heard indoors or to wake people who are sleeping.

The Tornado Warning sound is a steady three-minute tone followed by a verbal announcement, which states what the particular emergency is and what specific action you must take. [Note: This verbal announcement is not critical to saving lives; instead, it is used to verify the activation of the siren is intentional and not a malfunction or test.]

All Clear Messages

Emergency Management does not activate the sirens to indicate an ALL CLEAR; instead, we make a verbal announcement via the Outdoor Warning System stating that THE THREAT HAS PASSED AND ALL IS CLEAR. ALL CLEAR messages are also shared via cable override and social media platforms.

2. CABLE OVERRIDE

Cable override (a preemptive message that displays over the regular broadcast) is a valuable tool to warn Stillwater residents of a local emergency, including severe weather events. In addition to homes, many public buildings (waiting rooms, schools/daycares, stores, etc.) have access to Suddenlink cable television. Cable overrides are often their first notification of danger. Tulsa and Oklahoma City weather reporters are not focused on Stillwater—we are.

3. BE INFORMED, STILLWATER

Be Informed Stillwater is a state-of-the-art citywide notification system designed to alert residents about emergencies and other community news. This service allows you to sign up for alerts on home or cell phones, by voice or text messages, or by e-mail. For example, you would receive notifications about emergencies that might affect your home, your workplace, and your child's school. In addition to traditional emergency alerts, the system also allows you to choose to receive a variety of other important community alerts and informational bulletins that interest you. These alerts, which also includes ALL CLEAR messages for tornadoes.

To sign up, <http://stillwater.org>, follow the Online Services tab to Emergency Alerts.

4. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a good tool for providing critical local forecasts and updates leading up to and after severe weather. It's generally not used while staff are in the middle of severe weather operations.

Facebook ([Facebook.com/StwSema](https://www.facebook.com/StwSema)) and Twitter ([Twitter.com/cos_ok_sema](https://twitter.com/cos_ok_sema)).