

# Search and Rescue Severe Weather Guidelines

Anytime a **Watch** (Thunderstorm, Tornado, or Flood) is issued in Davison County or a neighboring county by the National Weather Service, Dispatch (8-2) will page Search and Rescue via the normal call out procedure with a message **for informational purposes only**. We will not respond to a Watch. When notified you need to get things in line and pay a little more attention to the weather, in anticipation of a call out for weather spotting.

Anytime a **Warning** (Thunderstorm, Tornado, or Flood) is issued in Davison County or a neighboring county by the National Weather Service, Dispatch (8-2) will call out Search and Rescue via the normal call out procedure for storm spotting. You will normally be instructed to report for weather spotting, or to contact SR Mentele; as he is the normal coordinator of Severe Weather Operations for S.A.R. If directed to contact SR Mentele, do so on channel "S AND R" on your radio. Do not contact Mitchell PD Dispatch!!! It is almost impossible for SR Mentele to coordinate coverage via cell phone with several spotters, so please use your radio. Contact SR Mentele on the radio and advise him you are available. SR Mentele will likely pair you up with another S.A.R. member and assign you a Division. A reasonable attempt will be made to place S.A.R. members in a convenient Division or one they are familiar with. However, not everyone will be able to respond to every incident. If you are already paired up, call in as a unit and request your location. Spotter Area Division Maps, which have been laminated with the S.A.R. Roster on the back, are in each S.A.R. vehicle and on the table just inside the shed.

Please be sure your radio and spare battery are charged and your gear is ready if called. It is also recommended to never be out spotting alone, so please team up. If you know we are expecting storms, have a plan in place. Have your gear ready and call another team member that you normally go with and discuss what vehicle and equipment you will be using. This will reduce the amount of radio traffic and decision making on the coordination end. Also remember that this is a very important job we are doing for the citizens of Davison County and need to treat it as such.

If a citizen calls in a tornado or funnel cloud, we will be asked to confirm. Note that 8-2 may sound the siren before a S.A.R. member has time to confirm. Notify SR Mentele on any major weather happenings, as he will be the point of contact for 8-2.

SR Mentele will make the call to call off the spotting. At the conclusion of the event, all Search and Rescue members should contact SR Mentele on channel "S AND R" on your radio and inform him you are standing down. This way everyone is accounted for. We may or may not rally at the shed for a debriefing.

The Suburban and the Dodge pickup have iPads installed, with weather apps loaded. These apps are also available for you to load on your personal devices if you choose. The MEOC, if deployed, has 3 new laptops, as well as a new MIFI. The printer is also installed.

If you need assistance, please let us know and we will help. Emergency Management will be responsible for opening the Courthouse as an emergency shelter.

**Warning Sirens:** The Davison County Office of Emergency Management works closely with the 911 Dispatch. Sirens will sound **ONLY** for the following Severe Weather: 1. Tornado Warnings issued by the National Weather Service. 2. Cloud rotation observed by a trained weather spotter. 3. An actual tornado observed by a trained weather spotter. **NOTE:** Sirens are **NOT** activated for Severe Thunderstorms.

**Siren Information for your Community:**

Mitchell- Nine warning sirens are located within the City of Mitchell area and will sound according to the guidelines stated above. The Mitchell Police Department Dispatch is responsible for sounding the sirens during the event a warning is issued. There is one designated Emergency Storm Shelter in Mitchell, which is the Courthouse. If you are in need of shelter, the courthouse will be open anytime the siren is sounding. There are also six pre-designated disaster relief shelters in Mitchell to be used after a disaster, to include: The Davison County 4-H Fairgrounds Building, James Valley Community Center, Salvation Army, First United Methodist Church, Mitchell Recreation Center, and the Corn Palace.

Ethan- One siren is centrally located in the City of Ethan and will sound according to the guidelines stated above. The City of Ethan is responsible for sounding the City siren during the event a warning is issued. There is one designated Emergency Storm Shelter in Ethan, which is the Ethan Public School. If you are in need of shelter, the school will be open anytime the siren is sounding. There are three pre-designated disaster relief shelters in the Ethan area to be used after a disaster, to include: Ethan Public School, Holy Trinity Catholic Church, and Ethan United Methodist Church.

Mt. Vernon- One siren is centrally located in the City of Mt. Vernon and will sound according to the guidelines stated above. The City of Mt. Vernon is responsible for sounding the City siren during the event a warning is issued. There is one designated Emergency Storm Shelter in Mt. Vernon, which is the downtown gym on First and Main. If you are in need of shelter, the gym will be open anytime the siren is sounding. There is one pre-designated disaster relief shelter in the Mt. Vernon area to be used after a disaster, which is the Mt. Vernon Public School.