



CLINTON COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Future of the Outdoor Warning Siren System

CLINTON COUNTY, IOWA – The Clinton County Emergency Management (EM) Commission has unanimously voted to discontinue use of the outdoor warning siren system in Clinton County, though individual municipalities may choose to continue use. The Emergency Management Commission is comprised of the mayors of each incorporated city in Clinton County as well as one member of the Board of Supervisors and the Clinton County Sheriff.

Discussion regarding the future of the system began when Constellation, the operator of the Quad Cities Clean Energy Center (nuclear generating station), announced proposed changes to their alert and notification systems in April of 2023. Constellation is working towards a transition from using the 16 outdoor warning sirens they own and operate within Clinton County and moving to more modern, electronic alerts. Constellation stated the sirens could be given to local jurisdictions and may be integrated into the County owned and operated system, which is comprised of an additional 18 sirens.

Constellation's announcement presented an opportunity for the EM Commission to evaluate the future of the siren system. Considering the high cost to taxpayers for taking ownership of the Constellation sirens and continued operation of the system, as well as considerable advances in more precise and detailed electronic alerting systems, the EM Commission voted unanimously to not accept the Constellation sirens and to decommission the Commission owned system. On August 5, 2024, this decision was also supported by unanimous vote of the Clinton County Board of Supervisors.

The high costs considered by the EM Commission included a one-time cost to adopt the Constellation sirens of \$85,000, and additional annual cost estimated at \$20,000 and a full system update cost estimated at \$816,000 expected in 2029.

Individual municipalities within Clinton County retain the right to vote on whether they wish to independently adopt and operate sirens located in their jurisdictions. City Councils within Clinton County are having these discussions presently.

Clinton County participates in the Alert Iowa program, a utility which allows for public alert and notification of specific threats, and is provided free of charge to Clinton County by the State of Iowa. Residents can register for this program at:

https://www.clintoncounty-ia.gov/emergency_management/alert_iowa/

Residents can also receive weather alerts via many other outlets, including NOAA weather radios, weather apps for smart phones, television, and radio.

Once decisions are made by the individual municipalities, the Emergency Management Commission will make extensive notifications to the public regarding the future of the outdoor warning systems and assist the public with the continued migration to Alert Iowa, IPAWS (the Federal Integrated Public Alert and Warning System) and NOAA Weather Radios. As always Clinton County Emergency Management is committed to improving public safety.

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