

PC 11-13-2025

Oral
Communications

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Cupertino PSC: Outdoor Emergency Sirens (Nov 2025)

1. Community & Stakeholder Signals

- Nextdoor / Reddit / WhatsApp poll: **low engagement**, **~70% say not needed**, ~10% want to explore
- Fire staff: **high upfront cost, maintenance burden**, unclear ROI vs **AlertSCC/WEA**
- Council outreach: **no clear policy support** so far

2. What Nearby Cities Are Doing (CA / Bay Area)

- **Berkeley** – 10–12 voice sirens; ~2–3 uses/yr; **~\$2M install**, ~\$50K/yr
- **Oakland** – ~50–60 sirens, monthly tests; **\$1–1.5M install**, \$30–40K/yr upkeep
- **San Francisco** – 119 sirens **offline since 2019**; upgrade est. **\$2.5M–\$20M**; relies on AlertSF + WEA
- **Beverly Hills** – 12 sirens; **\$700K–\$1.2M install**, ~\$20–30K/yr; multilingual outreach yields ~80% awareness

3. Cost & ROI Considerations

- Typical cost: **\$25K–\$50K per siren**
- Cupertino scale (~20 sirens): **~\$500K+ upfront**, **~\$30K/yr**
- Sirens are **outdoor-only**; limited indoor audibility
- **Phones outperform** sirens on reach, speed, cost, and clarity
- Best practice: **multi-channel alerting**, not siren-only systems

4. Recommendation

- **Defer siren exploration for now** due to low community demand, high cost, and stronger alternatives (AlertSCC, WEA, Nixle)