

Outdoor Emergency Sirens

Public Safety Commission



**CITY OF
CUPERTINO**

Types Alert/Warning

- WEA (Wireless Emergency Alert)
- EAS (Emergency Alert System)
- NWR (NOAA Weather Radio)
- IPAWS (Integrated Public Alert and Warning System)
- Outdoor Sirens

History

- Pre-World War 2 – Volunteer fire fighters and civil defense
- World War 2 – Civil defense and air raids
- Cold War – Nuclear fallout
- Tornado Alerts in Midwest and Deep South
- Generally required within ten-mile radius of nuclear power plants

Benefits

- Reach people outside, away from TV, radio, phone
- Attention grabbing, prompt residents to seek further information
- Multi-tonal systems may be used to differentiate between hazards
- Additional layer of redundancy
- Rural areas or limited cell service

Drawbacks

- Sound muffled
 - Less useful for people indoors, especially at night
- No/little instruction given
- Alert signals and meaning vary
- Sound based system excludes Deaf/HOH population

San Francisco

- 50 tone only sirens installed 1942
- 109 voice capability sirens installed 2011
- Sirens inactive since 2019
 - Cybersecurity concerns
 - Expensive to upgrade

San Luis Obispo County

- Single Use- Diablo Canyon Power Plant
- PG&E is plant operator – covers many costs
- Only placed within Emergency Planning Zone
- Also alert via WEA, EAS

Beverly Hills

- 12 sirens installed 2023
- Announcements broadcasted in English, Farsi, and Spanish
- Original funding request
 - \$987,232 to purchase sirens
 - \$810,486 to install sirens

Pierce County

- Originally used to warn volcanic mudslides from Mt Rainier
- 40 sirens in Puyallup River and Nisqually River Valleys
- Also warn via PCALERT
- 20+ years of education and outreach

Lahaina

- Sirens traditionally used for tsunamis
 - Every 3-5 years on average
- Sirens use mobile connection, cellular service disruption during fire prevented use
- Increased hesitancy after false missile alert January 13,2018