

## Severe Weather Sirens

By Gerald Luedeking , Richland Fire Department Chief

There are five tornado sirens. They are located at DE Avenue and Bunkerhill (near the high school), DE and Gull Road, 32nd Street and CD Avenue (near the post office) C Avenue and 28th Street, and West Gull Lake Drive, near the Gull Lake Country Club. These sirens are set off by the fire department. Richland Village and Richland Township cooperated in placing these sirens. The sirens were placed in areas with the highest concentration of people, and, an attempt was made to serve the largest possible area.

There is an additional siren located on the Zoetis' property (formerly Upjohn's Farm). This siren is not controlled by the fire department.

Basically, the fire department is notified of severe weather including tornado warnings. The fire station is manned at that point. If, it appears that Richland Township is in the path of a tornado the sirens are blown. The siren is a one-minute long blast. If additionally tornados are spotted, the siren will be blown again. If you hear a weather siren, you should immediately turn on the radio or TV for additional information. Also, keep in mind a tornado warning may be issued for Kalamazoo County even though only Wakeshma Township is in the path of the storm.

Kalamazoo County does not want, and will not take, responsibility for blowing the siren.

In 2012, Kalamazoo County was placed under a tornado warning. We watched this storm very closely. The direction of the storm path was through Alamo township with a slight portion of Cooper Township involved. I chose not to blow the siren, as it did not appear that the path of this storm would affect any portion of Richland Township. I would like the citizens of Richland and Richland Township to know if the sirens are blown, the fire department feels that there is a real and imminent danger to the citizens, and they should seek shelter.

**The sirens are tested the first Saturday of every month at 1:00 pm.**