

***By Jan Schultz***

***The Imperial Republican***

It's important to take cover and get to a basement or other protective area if the tornado siren is blown, said Deputy Emergency Management Director Duane Dreiling.

Sunday was a good example, he noted.

Dreiling was sitting at the north end of Broadway at Titan Machinery and saw strong rotation in the clouds with hail in them that passed right over him.

It had the potential of 80 mph winds, and the storm upended pivots in that area.

Whether that was done by a tornado or not, Dreiling said there was a real threat Sunday afternoon, so the siren was blown.

"It is designed as a tornado warning," Dreiling emphasized.

Spotters are always in contact with the National Weather Service (NWS) when severe weather is in the area, but the local spotters make the decision to sound the siren because they are the ones on the ground. NWS uses radar images in making decisions on warnings.

The siren will continue to blow until the threat is passed, then will be shut down, Dreiling said.

The tornado siren has a different tone than the more-familiar fire whistle. The tornado siren tone goes up and stays at that level until it is shut off when the threat has passed. The fire whistle has an up-and-down tone.

The siren at Enders Lake may be utilized a little differently, Dreiling noted.

It may also be sounded in situations such as very high winds in order to give people on the lake a warning to move to shore, he said.