



# Huntington Beach Police Department

2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach, CA 92648

(714) 960-8811

Robert Handy, Chief of Police

## Media Advisory

**Prepared by:** Officer Angela Bennett, PIO **Release Date/Time:** Feb. 13, 20/7:35 a.m.

---

**Subject:** Emergency Siren Update

**Case Number:** N/A

### Details:

On February 7, 2020, at about 4am, the City's Emergency Siren system activated in error, causing many of our residents to be fearful there was an impending emergency. Since then, our Information Systems Department has been diligently working to resolve the issue in an effort to ensure a false alarm does not happen again.

After the false alarm occurred, our team conducted a thorough review and identified that the activation happened due to a time zone configuration error. It appears that the time zone for the system was set to Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), and the sirens activated as part of regularly scheduled monthly testing at 4 a.m., rather than at the normally scheduled time of 12:00 p.m.

The time zone was incorrect due to a software upgrade, which was inadvertently "live" prior to staff receiving training. City personnel have now been trained to use the new software, and we are ready to test the equipment. We will reactivate all of the sirens individually on Thursday, February 13, during the morning hours. The test that will be conducted will be a brief "growl" test, which lasts for just a few seconds and is not a full wail. Most of our residents will not hear this test, and it will be done to ensure the sirens are working and our system upgrade is operational.

In addition to testing the upgraded equipment, this is a good opportunity for us to share some information about what our residents should do in an actual emergency. In the event of a crisis, multiple layers of notifications will occur. This includes an Emergency Alert System (EAS) via radio, TV and cable TV. KWVE 107.9 is Orange County's primary station to broadcast all EAS messages. AlertOC is another mass notification system designated to keep our community aware, and we strongly recommend everyone register for alerts at [www.AlertOC.org](http://www.AlertOC.org). Additionally, there are eight sirens located at each of the fire stations in our City. These sirens may be activated for any impending emergency and is not specific to any one emergency. Finally, the City will notify residents via social media. For more specific details about what to do in an emergency, please see the attached flier.

The City of Huntington Beach prides itself on our emergency preparedness, and we encourage you to take this opportunity to ensure you and your family are prepared and ready to stay safe in an emergency. For additional information, please visit our website at: [https://huntingtonbeachca.gov/government/departments/fire/emergency\\_preparedness/emergency-preparedness.cfm](https://huntingtonbeachca.gov/government/departments/fire/emergency_preparedness/emergency-preparedness.cfm).

###