

Calder Valley flood warning sirens put to the test

The sirens will be sounded at 1pm on Thursday 30 September in Walsden, Todmorden, Hebden Bridge and Mytholmroyd.

Each siren test will last for two minutes. Residents and businesses do not need to take any action when hearing the sirens at these times. Loud hailer vehicles will be used to alert people to the tests, ahead of the sirens being sounded.

Graham Lindsey, flood resilience team leader at the Environment Agency, said:

The testing of the sirens is part of our work with partners to ensure that we are fully prepared to take action this winter wherever it is needed.

It is important that we test the audibility of sirens to check that they can be heard as widely as possible. The sirens provide a useful way of quickly alerting the communities at risk in the upper valley, an area where we know that flooding can occur extremely quickly.

Although no action needs to be taken during the test, if you hear the sirens at any other time, please be aware that this means that flooding is expected from the local rivers.

With an audibility level similar to that used by emergency vehicles, the Environment Agency uses the sirens to warn people of possible imminent flooding from the River Calder that runs through the valley.

There are a total of eight flood warning sirens across the Upper Calder Valley. There are four sirens in Todmorden which are sited at the fire station, the high school, Morrisons and Weir Minerals. There is also a siren at Walsden, two in Hebden Bridge, one in Mytholmroyd and a community siren in Sowerby Bridge.

While a lot of work continues to be done to address flooding in the Calder Valley, with the completion of defences at Mytholmroyd and the start of construction of defences in Hebden Bridge, these schemes will reduce rather than eliminate the likelihood of flooding, so it is important that people are prepared.

All residents and businesses in the Calder Valley are encouraged to sign up to the Environment Agency's flood warning service, which gives advanced notification of flooding via phone, text and email. It is the principal way that flood warnings are issued, and those who sign up can manage their registrations online so that they can receive warnings wherever they are.

To register for the Environment Agency's flood warning service visit <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings> or contact Floodline on tel: 0345 988 1188.

For the latest information on current flood warnings and the local weather forecast, Calderdale residents can visit the 'Eye on Calderdale' website – www.eyeoncalderdale.com or following @EnvAgencyYNE and @Calderdale on Twitter.