

The Fire Whistle

By The Wolfe City Volunteer Fire Department

Here's our annual "what's that sound" post.

It has been brought to our attention that there is some confusion on the meanings of each ring of the fire whistle. The fire whistle has been utilized for years as a way to notify the firefighters in town when there is an emergency. It is also used to alert the city if our area is placed under a Tornado Warning.



1 ring of the fire whistle:

EMS response, wrecks, grass fires, vehicle fires, fire alarms, public assists, gas leaks and any other miscellaneous emergency call.



2 rings of the fire whistle:

Structure Fire response.



Tornado Warning:

The fire whistle will ring on and off continuously for a minimum of 3 minutes or until the operator of the fire whistle needs to take cover. We will try our best to continuously ring the fire whistle throughout the duration of the tornado warning so there isn't any confusion on whether or not the warning is over.

- ⚠️ The fire whistle DOES NOT need to be the primary means of notification for a Tornado Warning. Depending on the wind direction and wind speed, the fire whistle may be heard on one side of town better than the other. You need to have a more reliable way of receiving notifications for severe weather such as a weather radio or cell phone alerts. ⚠️

The fire whistle was mainly used in the days prior to radios and cell phones. As we now receive our notifications of an emergency through our radios and cell phones, we still utilize the fire whistle as a secondary way to notify our firefighters of an emergency. We also still utilize it because the fire service is all about tradition, and the fire whistle is something traditional to our fire department and this city.