

**Union County  
Resolution #106-16  
November 14, 2017**

# **Union County, Town of Clayton, New Mexico**

## **Severe Weather Plan**

## **Background:**

For many years, the citizens of Union County have volunteered to cooperate in efforts to provide timely and accurate severe weather information to the community and the National Weather Service. Union County Emergency Management (all responders) has coordinated this effort. The installation of modern weather monitoring equipment and communications equipment at specific locations in Clayton and Union County has enhanced the timeliness and accuracy of weather information, but the trained weather spotter, providing “ground truth”, field observations remains the most important function in the severe weather plan.

Union County and Clayton have a dramatic history for severe winter storms and blizzards. High wind events and tornadoes are common to the area. Of utmost importance are problems (many without solutions) related to the communication of weather forecasts and details to County residents. TV communication is inconsistent; County residents receive television programming from a variety of sources. More people hear Amarillo television than New Mexico channels. TV reception is difficult, if not impossible for some residents. One AM/FM radio station, KLMX Radio (AM 1450, FM 97.5), serves the County. That station’s service is limited; many residents don’t receive KLMX. Two-way radio communications and cell phone service are not consistent. Clayton and Union County government officials are committed to the improvement of communications for their residents and enhanced communications through the processes of interoperable communications. National Weather Service reports that, specifically, this County’s radar detection capabilities are less efficient than others.

## **Purpose:**

The purpose of this document is to merge and collate both written and unwritten severe weather procedures used by the county, city, and villages, and local volunteer personnel into a format that provides information and guidance to members of the weather observation network.

## **Meteorological Terminology:**

- A “**Watch**” Is a National Weather Service Term that means conditions are favorable for the development of threatening weather in the watch area. Persons in the watch area should monitor changing weather conditions and be prepared to take shelter.
- A” **Warning**” Is a term used by the National Weather Service that means threatening weather has developed, has been verified by NEXRAD radar and/or trained storm spotters and poses a risk to persons in the warned area. Appropriate safety measures should be taken immediately.

- A “**Blizzard Warning**” carries a very serious connotation. It is the most serious winter storm warning; more violent, more dangerous. Its urgency is equal to that of a tornado warning.

### **Union County, Clayton Spotter Network:**

The following personnel constitute the local storm spotter network:

1. The primary storm spotters are the Emergency Management Director, Volunteer Fire Fighters, and Emergency Management volunteers. They have completed the NWS training and have limited mobile communications equipment. Union County, Clayton Emergency Management is tasked with the coordination of the storm spotter network. A Directory of NOAA certified weather spotters will be on file and will be updated, at least, annually.
2. Secondary storm spotters that may be available are local law enforcement officers, EMS, County Road Department, Clayton Dispatch, NM DOT and County residence.
3. Telephone or radio queries to the National Weather Service, neighboring jurisdictions and county residents are used as needed to gain additional weather information.
4. The Storm spotter network will be activated when the Emergency Manager or his designee, have been advised by the National Weather Service, or received inclement weather notification from other means that Union County and the Town of Clayton may be impacted by severe weather.
5. Weather spotter training and weather planning training will be provided in Union County:
  - NOAA SKYWARN training every 2 years.
  - 
  - Public displays at Union County Fair, Health Fair, and at least one athletic event.
  - General weather planning training sessions in the Fall and Spring.
  - Specific training for HAM operators.
  - Awareness articles in local newspaper, social media, county website and other documents.

### **Union County, Clayton Spotter Assignments:**

Emergency Management Staff customarily makes a subjective determination of the threat level posed by weather conditions and the Area of Union County most likely to be affected in assigning spotters to particular locations.

### **Emergency Management Duties:**

The following is a partial listing of tasks and duties to be carried out by the Emergency Management Staff in conjunction with severe weather activities.

1. Arrange and host annual National Weather Service "Severe Weather Awareness" training for storm spotters, dispatchers, first responders and the public.
2. Continually test and maintain communications and weather equipment in the Emergency Management office, Clayton PD Dispatch Center, Sierra Base and the Santa Fe Control Center. The Emergency Manager will monitor the function and maintenance of early warning sirens in Clayton and Des Moines.
3. To the extent practical, pay attention to weather conditions, forecasts and meteorological data to determine the likelihood of severe or threatening weather.
4. Contact by phone or page the volunteer storm spotters, to inform them that the National Weather Service or other weather information provider has stated that atmospheric conditions are favorable for the development of severe weather in our area.
5. Activate the Union County – Clayton Weather Spotter Network upon learning of the imminent threat of severe weather if merited and have available someone in the Emergency Management office and/or Dispatch Center to watch radar and track spotter information.
6. Advise personnel at Clayton PD Dispatch when the spotter network is activated and keep them informed of threatening weather conditions.
7. Advise Town and County Government officials and LEPC membership concerning imminent severe weather and procedures in place.
8. Coordinate the storm spotter network while keeping the spotters informed of conditions that might threaten their personal safety.
9. Solicit and log storm spotter observations and immediately make appropriate notifications to the National Weather Service, and Central Dispatch if threatening weather exists.
10. To the extent possible keep responsible persons at high-participation events informed of potentially threatening weather conditions.
11. Keep notification list for Watches and Warnings up-to-date for Central Dispatch.
12. Upon the approach of an actual weather watch or warning, potential tornado or funnel cloud that threatens the immediate vicinity of Clayton, Amistad and Sedan areas, Grenville, Des Moines, Folsom, Capulin, the Gladstone area and/or the Dry Cimarron area, contact Clayton PD Dispatch, so that they can page or announce the area most likely to be affected by the event.

13. Keep the National Weather Service informed of potentially damaging conditions, i.e. hail-dime size or larger, high winds, and rotation in clouds or funnel.
14. When Severe Weather is no longer a threat to the community, weather spotters will be deactivated and Dispatch will be notified.
15. Collect storm damage information and report the same to the National Weather Service and the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.
16. Be prepared to activate the Emergency Operations Center, and implement the Emergency Operations Plan in the event of excessive storm damage or injury.
17. Emergency Management Personnel/responders communications will be conducted on Union County Fire. As responder groups take form and more specific information is available, an incident commander will be responsible for assigning interoperable channels.
18. Warnings, using the active early notification sirens, will be issued for Clayton and Des Moines if those towns are in imminent danger of being impacted by the storm or tornado.
19. The CodeRED early warning notification system will be activated to warn residents in Clayton and available outlying areas in the County. The Emergency Manager will support the use of that system.
20. The CodeRED warning system will be used to provide early warning at the Northeast Detention Facility. The Emergency Manager will support the use of that system.
21. The Office of Emergency Management and responder agencies will be actively involved in the organization of HAM operators in the County and will develop training activities for those radio operators.
22. Public information campaigns will be organized and funds sought to secure and place NOAA weather radios in Union County homes and businesses.

**Central Dispatch Duties:**

1. When the National Weather Service issues a severe thunderstorm or tornado watch or a severe thunderstorm or tornado warning, Dispatch receives information through the NWS law enforcement network.
2. Upon direction from the Emergency Management Office, or the Union County Sheriff's Office, Clayton Police Department, or New Mexico State Police, emergency notifications will be issued. Personnel at Clayton PD Dispatch will sound sirens based on emergency notification from the National Weather Service or designated weather spotters.
3. When a tornado is confirmed, either the Emergency Manager or Dispatch will notify the National Weather Service at 1-888-386-7637.
4. Warnings will only be issued when one of the following advises Dispatch that danger from an approaching storm is imminent?"

- a. Emergency Manager
- b. Clayton Police Chief
- c. Clayton Fire Chief
- d. Union County Sheriff
- e. Dispatch personnel, based on emergency warnings from National Weather Service or designated weather spotters.

### **Severe Winter Storms (Snow and Ice)**

During the winter months, Union County and the Town of Clayton can be impacted by blizzard conditions, or ice storms that will necessitate the closure of Highway 64/87 to the West and Southwest, Highway 56 to the East/West, and Highway 402 to the South. New Mexico State Police is the agency authorized to close roads and highways.

*(State of New Mexico Statute 66-7-11. New Mexico State Police power to close certain highways in emergencies.)*

*Notwithstanding any rule or agreement of the Department of Transportation, the New Mexico State Police, in cases of emergency where the condition a state, United States of interstate highway presents a substantial danger to vehicular travel by reason of storm, fire, accident, spillage of hazardous materials or other unusual or dangerous conditions, may temporarily close such highway to vehicular travel; provided that the state police shall use all means necessary to reroute traffic around the accident or incident scene using lands, shoulders, frontage roads or alternative routes that may be available and physically unaffected by the accident or incident. The Department of Transportation shall be notified of the highway closure as soon as practicable and assist the state police with traffic control. During the course of any investigation where evidence is present in the travel portion of the roadway, such evidence shall be documented and collected first so that the roadway can be cleared and traffic can be routed through the scene. Any other law enforcement agency that may be investigating an accident or incident where the investigating agency believes closure of the highway is necessary shall contact the state police immediately. The state police shall evaluate the emergency situation and determine if the closure is necessary and, with the assistance of the investigating agency, shall reroute traffic around the accident or incident scene. The state police shall make the final determination regarding the length of time it is necessary to have the highway closed and other law enforcement agencies shall adhere to the directions of the state police.*

Closure of these main transportation arteries in and out of Clayton can cause a major impact on the town and the county. Although the storm spotter network may not be needed, a response by first responders will be necessary. Those duties may include but not limited to:

- 1. Traffic control:
  - a. Assisting motorists to motels or shelters

- b. Directing large trucks to an area where they will be safe and out of the way;
  - c. Assisting with shelter operations;
- 2. Search and Rescue:
  - a. Assisting in rescuing stranded travelers and taking them to a motel or shelter.
  - b. Assisting at -risk residents who may have lost heat and power.
- 3. Sheltering:
  - a.
  - b. When there is a need for sheltering, the Union County National Guard Armory contact will be notified.

**Management of Local Street/Road/Highway routes:**

NMDOT identifies the main priority as Highway 64/87 and Highway 56.

To access the Northeast New Mexico Detention Facility, the intersection between 64/87 and the prison facility (Dr. Michael Jenkins Road) will be opened.

A current hospital route takes into consideration access to the hospital emergency room entrance and access to Clayton Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Center. That route will be published in the local newspaper early each winter.

Collaboration among resources: Town of Clayton, Union County, and New Mexico resource personnel will collaborate to provide the best possible and safest access to streets, roads, and highways.

## SEVERE WEATHER NOTIFICATION CHECKLIST

### WEATHER WATCH / WEATHER WARNING (Thunderstorm or Tornado)

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Office Number</b>	<b>Cell Number</b>	<b>Home Number</b>
Emergency Manager	Dusty Russell	575-207-5454	575-207-5454	575-278-3020
Sheriff	James Lobb	575-374-2583	575-207-5073	
Police Chief	Scott Julian	575-374-2504	575-303-3415	
Clayton Fire	Justin Drumm	575-374-3435	806-268-4260	
UC Fire	Jim O'Bryant	575-207-7233	575-207-7233	
EMS – Cap, DM, Fol, Grn		575-278-3473		
City Manager	Ferron Lucero	575-374-8331	575-224-1925	
County Manager	Angie Gonzales	575-374-8896	575-207-8896	
Radio Station	KLMX	575-374-2555		
Hospital	Tammy Chavez	575-374-2585	575-308-7682	
Clayton N&R	Carolyn Kear	575-374-2353	575-207-7409	
Clayton School	Stacy Diller	575-374-9611	575-447-2743	
Des Moines School	Kodi Sumpter	575-278-2611	719-859-1673	
Capulin Fire	Garland King		505-360-0295	575-278-2051
Des Moines Village Hall		575-278-2127		
Folsom Village Hall		575-278-3567		
Grenville Village Hall		575-278-2051		
Fire Dept. – Cap, DM, Fol, Grn		575-278-4357		
National Weather Service		505-244-9150		
Sedan Fire Dept.	Joe Reeser		575-207-7061	
Amistad Fire Dept.	Jimmy Clay		575-590-7989	

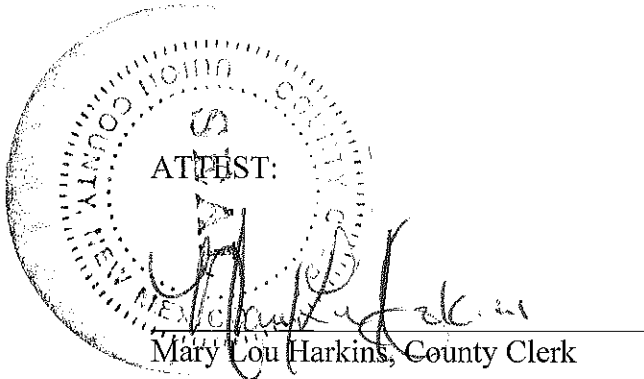


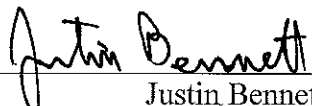
## Interoperability Communication Channels

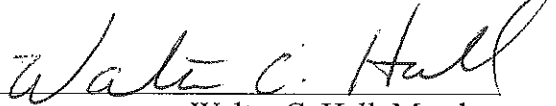
	Channel Name	Display	RX	RX P/L	TX	TX P/L
	Union County Fire	1UNCOFD	158.865	110.9	155.85	110.9
	Sedan Fire	5SEDNFD	158.865	110.9	155.85	136.5
	VTAC 11	33VTC11	151.1375N		Simplex	
	VTAC 12	34VTC12	154.4525N		Simplex	
	VTAC 13	35VTC13	158.7375N		Simplex	
	VTAC 14	36VTC14	159.4725N		Simplex	
	VTAC 17	37VTC17	161.8500W		157.25	
	VTAC 17 D	38VT17D	161.8500W		Simplex	
	VTAC 18	39VTC18	161.8250W		157.225	
	VTAC 18 D	40VT18D	161.8250W		Simplex	
	VTAC 19	41VTC19	161.8750W		157.275	
	VTAC 19 D	42VT19D	161.8750W		Simplex	
	VFIRE 21 {MAC 1}	43VFR21	154.2800W		Simplex	
	VFIRE 22	44VFR22	154.2650W		Simplex	
	VFIRE 23	45VFR23	154.295N		Simplex	
	VFIRE 24	46VFR24	154.2725N		Simplex	
	VFIRE 25	47VFR25	154.2875N		Simplex	
	VFIRE 26	48VFR26	154.3025N		Simplex	


**DONE** at Clayton, County of Union this 14<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2017.

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS – UNION COUNTY



  
 Justin Bennett, Chairman

  
 Walter C. Hall, Member

  
 W. Carr Vincent, Member

Adopted & Approved on November 14, 2017



DR MICHAEL JENKINS RD



N.E. NEW MEXICO  
DETENTION CENTER

BOISE CITY HWY  
US 56/64  
AIR PARK ST

TEXLINE HWY  
(US 87)

NARA VISA HWY (SR 402)

LAKE HWY (SR 370)

RATON HWY (US 54/87)

SPRINGER HWY (US 56)

SANTA FE DR

WILSON ST

N 4TH AVE

ST LOUIS ST

DEZAL ST

WALTER ST

WATER ST

NMSP

Emergency Routes

	Town Of Clayton
	State of NM

RABBIT EAR FIRE DEPARTMENT

Key to Symbols	
	US HIGHWAY
	STATE NUMBERED HIGHWAY
	COUNTY ROAD
	CITY ROAD
	PRIVATE LANE