

NOAA Weather Radio Fact Sheet

On October 24th, 2003 the National Weather Service installed a transmitter on a tower site near Adrian that will provide coverage for all of Lenawee County. This transmitter will provide local weather forecasts 24 hours a day. The most important feature of this new service is that it allows residents to receive alerts from NWS for severe weather watches, warnings, and emergency messages from local officials in case of a local non-weather incident such as a chemical spill. Further, anyone who purchases a NOAA Weather Radio receiver with certain features can put their receiver in a “standby” or “alert” mode, which means the unit is silent and will only activate when a watch, warning, or emergency affects Lenawee County.

What frequency does the Lenawee County tower broadcast on? The transmitter operates on one of the standard NOAA frequencies, 162.450.

Where can I purchase a radio receiver and what features should I look for? Several local electronic and department stores sell NOAA radios. Prices range from \$40-\$100. The most important features to look for is that the radio is equipped with SAME (Specific Area Message Encoding) and an “alert” mode. These features allow you to hear only alerts for Lenawee County. The receiver should also have an AC power supply and a battery backup, in case you lose your electricity.

What is a FIPS code? A FIPS code (sometimes called a SAME code) is used to program the receiver you purchase to alert only to Lenawee County messages. Each unit should come with directions on how to enter the correct FIPS code. The FIPS code for Lenawee County is **026091**.

How do I know my receiver works in the “alert” mode? The National Weather Service sends out a test message once a week on Wednesdays sometime between 11:00AM and 1:00PM. If potential severe weather exists at that time, the test will be delayed.

What if my receiver cannot pick up the transmitter’s signal? You should be able to receive the signal from the transmitter anywhere in Lenawee County. Sometimes, in a commercial or office building, you will need to place the unit near a window or connect it to an external antenna. Units made by different companies have been found to vary in reception quality. You may need to return your unit and purchase a different receiver.