



Community Foundation
of Morgan County, Inc.

News Release

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Centerton and Robb Hill/Beech Grove Tornado Sirens to be Installed With Help of Grant and Donations

MORGAN COUNTY, Ind. – Residents in the areas of Centerton and Robb Hill/Beech Grove in Morgan County will be better prepared for severe weather, thanks to a grant from Smithville Charitable Foundation, a donation from Indianapolis Power & Light Company (IPL), and funds from the Clay Township Board of Directors. Two new tornado sirens will be installed later this fall in areas which were previously underserved or not served at all.

The project idea was developed last year and was spearheaded by Bill Mitchell, Clay Township trustee; and John Phillips, Betty Conover, and LuMar Griggs, Clay Township board members. The group brought the need to Tom Zoss, executive director of the Community Foundation of Morgan County, to see how the foundation might help.

In total, nearly 230 residences in Centerton and Robb Hill/Beech Grove are currently not receiving emergency signaling because they are out of range of the nearest sirens. The new sirens will be high powered, omnidirectional, and include a battery backup and two-way digital controllers.

In Beech Grove near Robb Hill and Beech Grove Road at the Brooklyn/Clay Township Fire Department, a new siren will be installed to replace an existing siren which is 40 years old and only reaches 50 residences. The new siren will reach up to 120 residences.

The second siren, which will be placed near Centerton Road and State Road 67, will be a brand new addition, providing signaling to 250 residences, five businesses, an elementary school, a church, and several multiple-unit homes within 8,400 feet of the siren.

“This has really been a team effort,” Mitchell said. “In preparation for the installations, John Drapalik provided surveying at the two sites and John Trimpe assisted with engineering. When the sirens are ready, SCI-REMC will provide power to the sirens, and the Morgan County Sheriff’s Department will activate them.”

Though the sirens were greatly needed, there weren’t many funds available locally for the \$40,000 project.

Zoss wrote a grant request last year to Smithville Charitable Foundation. The private foundation provided a grant for \$18,450 to a fund at the Community Foundation of Morgan County to assist in the siren purchase.

(More)

“Because the Smithville company operates in mostly rural areas in the southern half of Indiana, they understand the needs of small communities such as Morgan County,” Zoss said. “The Smithville Charitable Foundation’s grant paved the way for this important project, and we are grateful that our residents will be safer thanks to their assistance.”

To bridge the gap in the budget, Indianapolis Power & Light Company, through its Eagle Valley Generating Station in southern Morgan County, reached out with a donation of \$7,500.

“Because it improves safety and preparedness efforts in our community, the Tornado Siren Fund is the type of project that Eagle Valley Generating Station and Indianapolis Power & Light Company looks to support,” said Dewayne Boyer, Eagle Valley Plant Manager. “IPL is grateful for the opportunity to partner with local organizations to help our community prepare for weather-related events.”

The additional funding needed to finish the project budget will be available from the Clay Township Board of Directors fund.

Sirens will be installed before fall and the project is being administered by the Community Foundation of Morgan County. More information on the foundation is available by calling toll-free (855) 280-3095 or by visiting the foundation’s website online at www.cfmconline.org.

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