

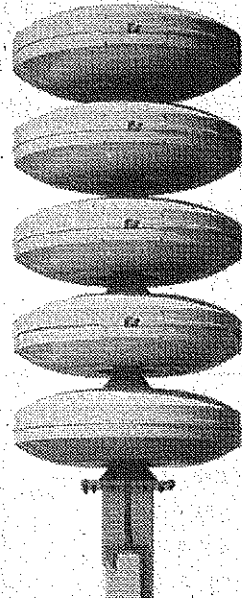
# Unicoi Springs Camp Resort installs severe weather warning siren

by Kristen Mangum  
White County News

A severe weather warning system recently installed at Unicoi Springs Camp Resort already has been put to good use.

Last week, when heavy rains flooded parts of White County and several tornados were reported nearby, the siren at the 156-acre private resort on Highway 356 sounded.

Doug Waters, vice-president of the resort's board of directors, said residents took appropriate shelter, which is



An early warning siren similar to this one has been installed at Unicoi Springs Camp Resort.

exactly what he had hoped for.

Waters, the former long-time Emergency Management Director of Jackson County, was instrumental in making the siren project a reality.

After the 2005 tornado hit Helen, Waters, 69, reported he began working to get a siren for the five-star camper facility.

"That tornado just missed us," he said. "Had we had a warning system, it would have been good."

"We're essentially nothing more than a mobile home park," Waters said. "But we're on wheels. We're not even tied down. Really, it's a small town."

The siren, made by Federal Signal Corporation, was privately purchased by the resort with input from White County Emergency Management Agency Director David Murphy.

"It was a private venture and the county helped coordinate it and worked it so it would benefit the surrounding communities as well," Murphy said.

The 400-watt siren covers a one-mile radius and was first activated last month.

"If you're in your camper at night and asleep — you're probably not going to have to throw the covers off.

"It'll blow 'em right off," Waters said of the sound the siren emits.

The resort's siren is tied into the White County warning system, meaning that Murphy and his office sound it when necessary. Testing is conducted the first Wednesday of each month when weather permits.

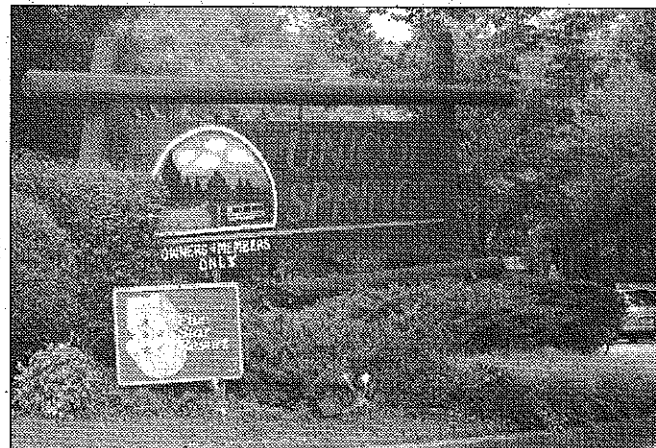
The project cost the resort \$15,000. Habersham Electric Membership Corporation donated the installation and labor toward the project.

The siren is located on a hillside behind the resort's maintenance building.

Before the resort installed the siren, its closest warning system was the siren located in the Innsbruck community in Helen.



Doug Waters, right, of Unicoi Springs Camp Resort discusses the fine points of the newly-installed severe weather warning siren at the resort with White County Emergency Management Agency Director David Murphy. (Photo/Kristen Mangum)



Unicoi Springs Camp Resort is located north of Unicoi State Park on Highway 356 near Helen. (Photo/Kristen Mangum)

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