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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORSYTH COUNTY ADDS NEW SAFETY FEATURE TO SEVERAL PARKS

New system designed to warn of lightning

Forsyth County, Georgia – The Forsyth County Parks & Recreation Department has recently added a new safety feature to several parks throughout the county. The Thor Guard Weather Warning System is designed to predict lightning before it strikes and is now in place at all of the department's athletic facilities and at Sawnee Mountain Preserve. The goal of using the system is to maximize safety by providing park staff and volunteers with critical, timely lightning warning information in an easy-to-use format.

The system's sensor continuously monitors the atmosphere's electrostatic energy as far away as 15 miles and evaluates the potential for lightning within an area approximately two miles in radius. When the system determines a hazardous condition, the siren is activated and a strobe light provides a visual alert for 15 seconds. When the threat of lightning is over, three five-second blasts are emitted by the siren to indicate that the area is safe from lightning threats and the strobe light will turn off. The system will only alert for lightning between the hours of 8 a.m. and 9 p.m.

Prior to the recent installations, the system was already in place at Joint Venture Park at Daves Creek, Lanierland Park, Matt Community Park at Settingdown Creek and Sharon Springs Park.

"We've been using this system at Sharon Springs Park for the past couple of years and it's proven to be a great tool to alert players and parents when conditions are favorable for a lightning strike," said Parks & Recreation Director Jim Pryor.

Over the last few months, the system was installed at Bennett Park, Central Park, Coal Mountain Park, Fowler Park, Midway Park, Sawnee Mountain Park and Sawnee Mountain Preserve.

"These recent installations mean that the Thor Guard Weather Warning System is now at every one of the Parks & Recreation Department's athletic facilities as well as Sawnee Mountain Preserve," said Pryor. "These are all very heavily used locations."

"Making advancements to help ensure the safety of those using our facilities is extremely important to us," said Pryor. "Residents who live near one of these parks may be able to hear the system alerts. This system is not intended to be a nuisance, but rather a safety device for our citizens and all of our park users."

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The installation of these systems was funded by capital project funds approved in the 2017 budget.

If you have any questions regarding this system, please call the Parks & Recreation Department at (770) 781-2215.

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