

At-A-Glance

Thunderstorms and Lightning

- Lightning's unpredictability increases the risk to individuals and property. Lightning often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall.
- Your chances of being struck by lightning are estimated to be 1 in 600,000 but could be reduced even further by following safety precautions.



Before Lightning Strikes...

- Postpone all outdoor activities.
- Remember the 30/30 Lightning Safety Rule: Go indoors if, after seeing lightning, you cannot count to 30 before hearing thunder. Stay indoors for 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder.
- Get inside a home, building, or hard top automobile (not a convertible). Although you may be injured if lightning strikes your car, you are much safer inside a vehicle than outside.
- Remember, rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide NO protection from lightning. However, the steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal.
- If you are in an open area, go to a low place such as a ravine or valley. Be alert for flash floods.
- If you are on open water, get to land and find shelter immediately.

During Lightning...

- Use your battery-operated NOAA Weather Radio for updates from local officials.
- Avoid contact with plumbing. Do not wash your hands, do not take a shower, do not wash dishes, and do not do laundry. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.
- Avoid natural lightning rods such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area. Avoid hilltops, open fields, the beach or a boat on the water.
- If you are driving, try to safely exit the roadway and park. Stay in the vehicle and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rain ends. Avoid touching metal or other surfaces that conduct electricity in and outside the vehicle.
- Lightning strike victims carry no electrical charge and should be helped immediately. Anyone who has been hit by lightning requires immediate medical care. Call 9-1-1 immediately.

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Did you know?

The majority of lightning victims were going to a safe place but waited too long before seeking shelter.

For additional information on lightning, go to www.ready.gov.



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