

When Thunderstorm & Lightning Strikes

Thunderstorm is invariably accompanied by lightning. A single stroke of lightning has 125,000,000 volts of electricity. That's enough power to light a 100-watt light bulb for more than 3 months, or enough to seriously hurt or to kill someone. Knowing what steps to take in the event of an oncoming thunder storm & lightning can save lives. Lightning is something you should not be careless about, so *Seek a safe shelter immediately!* Be warned, lightning can and does strike just about any object in its path. When you see lightning, follow these safety rules:

Indoors

- **Stay or go indoors!** If you hear thunder, don't go outside unless absolutely necessary. Stand clear from windows, doors and electrical appliances.
- **Stay away from anything that could conduct electricity.** This includes fireplaces, radiators, stoves, metal pipes, sinks, and phones. Unplug appliances well before a storm nears - **never during.**
- **Don't use any plug-in electrical appliances** like TV, music systems, mixers/blenders, iron press, hair dryers, or electric razors. If lightning strikes your house they can conduct the charge to you.
- **Don't use the telephone during the storm.** Lightning may strike telephone lines outside. Use the telephone only for emergencies quickly. Avoid contact with piping including sinks, baths and faucets.

Outdoors

- **When outdoors, seek shelter from lightning!** Buildings are best for shelter, but if no buildings are available, you can find protection in a cave, ditch, or a canyon. Trees are not good cover! Tall trees attract lightning. **Never use a tree as a shelter.**
- **Stay in your vehicle if you are traveling.** vehicles give you excellent lightning protection. Get in a hard topped car.
- **If you can't find shelter, avoid the tallest object in the area.** If only isolated trees are nearby, your best protection is to crouch in the open, keeping twice as far away from isolated trees as the trees are high. Avoid areas that are higher than the surrounding landscape. Spread out - don't stand in a crowd of people.
- **Don't use metal objects outside.** Keep away from metal objects including bikes, electric or telephone poles, fencing, machinery, etc.
- **Get out of the water.** This includes getting off small boats on the water. Immediately get out and away from pools, lakes, and other bodies of water.

When you feel the electrical charge – if your hair stands on end or your skin tingles – lightning may be about to strike near you. Immediately crouch down and cover your ears. **Do not lie down or place your hands on the ground.**

Victims of lightning shock should be administered CPM (cardio pulmonary resuscitation) i.e. artificial respiration, if necessary. Seek medical attention immediately.