



Lightning Safety

Summer is the peak season for one of the nation's deadliest weather phenomena - lightning. An average of 58 people are killed each year by lightning. To date, there have been 4 lightning deaths in 2010.

People struck by lightning could permanently suffer from a variety of long-term, debilitating symptoms including memory loss, attention deficits, sleep disorders, chronic pain, numbness, dizziness, stiffness in joints, irritability, fatigue, weakness, muscle spasms, depression, and more.

In the United States, there are an estimated 25 million lightning flashes each year. While documented lightning injuries in the United States average about 300 per year, undocumented injuries are likely much higher.

- **Watch for Developing Thunderstorms:** Thunderstorms are most likely to develop on spring or summer days but can occur year round.
- **When to Seek Safe Shelter:** Lightning can strike as far as 10 miles from the area where it is raining. That's about the distance you can hear thunder. If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance. Seek safe shelter immediately.
- **Outdoor Activities: Minimize the risk of being struck.** Most lightning deaths and injuries occur in the summer. Stop activities at the first roar of thunder to ensure you have time to get to a large building or enclosed vehicle.
- **Indoor Activities:** Inside buildings, stay off corded phones, computers and other electrical equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity. Stay away from pools (indoor or outdoor), tubs, showers and other plumbing. Buy surge suppressors for key equipment. Install ground fault protectors on circuits near water or outdoors. When inside, wait 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder, before going outside again.
- **Helping a Lightning Strike Victim:** Lightning victims do not carry an electrical charge, are safe to touch, and need urgent medical attention. Cardiac arrest is the immediate cause of death for those who die. Some deaths can be prevented if the victim receives the proper first aid immediately. Call 9-1-1 immediately and perform CPR if the person is unresponsive or not breathing. Use an Automatic External Defibrillator if one is available.
- **Summary:** Lightning is dangerous. With common sense, you can greatly increase your safety and the safety of those you are with.

**If you would like more information, please contact
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