



Lightning Safety

Lightning can provide a spectacular display of light on a dark night, but this awesome show of nature can also cause death and destruction. Lightning is the visible discharge of electrical energy. It is often accompanied by thunder, which is a sonic boom created by the same discharge. If you hear thunder, lightning is a threat, even if the storm seems miles away and the sky is blue. The electrical energy from lightning seeks a path to the ground – your home, the trees in your yard, or even *you* can be the chosen path.

SAFETY TIPS

1. Plan your evacuation and safety measures. At the first sign of lightning or thunder, activate your emergency plan. Lightning often precedes rain, so do not wait for the rain to begin before suspending activities. No place is absolutely safe from lightning; however, some places are much safer than others. The safest location during lightning activity is a large enclosed building. The second safest location is an enclosed metal topped vehicle, but NOT a convertible, bike, or other topless or soft-top vehicle.
2. If outdoors, get inside a suitable shelter **IMMEDIATELY**. Your only safe choice is to get to a protected building or vehicle. Avoid seeking shelter under a tree as a tree can attract lightning. In the event you are outdoors without a safe vehicle or shelter, follow outdoor safety tips at www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/outdoors.htm. Although these tips will not prevent you from being hit, they can HELP lessen the odds.
3. If indoors, avoid water, doors, windows, and using the telephone and headsets. Lightning could strike exterior wires, inducing shocks to inside equipment. Any item plugged into an electrical outlet may cause a hazard.
4. Do not resume activities until 30 minutes following the last observed lightning or thunder.
5. Injured persons do not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely. If you are qualified to do so, apply first aid procedures to a lightning victim. Call 911 or send for help immediately.

**For additional information, visit NOAA's lightning safety Web site:
www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov**