

Everyone Goes Home “SAFE”!

THUNDERSTORM SAFETY

Thunderstorm and Lightning Safety

Thunderstorms can occur year-round here in the Southeast, and they are all dangerous. Severe thunderstorms have winds of 58 miles per hour and/or hail about the size of a penny or larger.



*** During a thunderstorm, move inside and stay away from windows*

*** Sometimes, thunderstorms can and occasionally do produce tornadoes. Be alert to changing weather conditions*

*** Secure objects outside (like trash cans) to prevent them from blowing around*

Lightning is the MOST UNDERRATED weather hazard. On average, only floods kill more people. Lightning makes every single thunderstorm a potential killer, whether the storm produces one single bolt or ten thousand bolts. *On average, lightning kills and injures more people each year than tornadoes and hurricanes put together. It can be a very dangerous part of ANY thunderstorm that forms. ALL thunderstorms contain lightning!*

When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors

Studies have shown most people struck by lightning are struck not at the height of a thunderstorm, but before and after the storm has peaked. This is because lightning can strike as far as 10 miles from the area where it is raining and many people are unaware of how far lightning can strike from its parent thunderstorm.

Therefore, if you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance. Seek safe shelter immediately. Remember this lightning safety rule...**When thunder roars, go indoors and stay there until 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder.** DO NOT wait for the rain to start before seeking shelter, and do not leave shelter just because the rain has ended.



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While no place is 100% safe from lightning, some places are much safer than others. *With common sense, you can greatly increase your safety and the safety of those you are with. At the first clap of thunder, go to a large building or fully enclosed vehicle and wait 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before you go back outside.*

Know the difference between a 'watch' and 'warning'

- A 'watch' means that severe weather is possible.. something bad could happen, so keep an eye to the sky and stay close to a source of weather information

- A 'warning' means some kind of severe weather (tornado, severe thunderstorms, flood) has been spotted by someone or detected by radar.. you have to take cover immediately!

Remember, **YOU** are ultimately responsible for your personal safety, and should take appropriate action when threatened by lightning. *While no place is 100% safe from lightning, some places are much safer than others.*

Where to Go

The safest location during a thunderstorm is inside a large enclosed structure with plumbing and electrical wiring. These include shopping centers, schools, office buildings, and private residences.

If lightning strikes the building, the plumbing and wiring will conduct the electricity more efficiently than a human body. If no buildings are available, then an enclosed metal vehicle such as an automobile, van, or school bus makes a decent alternative.

What To Do

Once inside a sturdy building, stay away from electrical appliances and plumbing fixtures. As an added safety measure, stay in an interior room.

If you are inside a vehicle, roll the windows up, and

Where NOT to Go

Not all types of buildings or vehicles are safe during thunderstorms. Buildings which are NOT SAFE (even if they are "grounded") have exposed openings. These include beach shacks, metal sheds, picnic shelters/pavilions, carports, and baseball dugouts. Porches are dangerous as well.

Convertible vehicles offer no safety from lightning, even if the top is "up". Other vehicles which are NOT SAFE during lightning storms are those which have open cabs, such as golf carts, tractors, and construction equipment.

What NOT to Do

Lightning can travel great distances through power lines, especially in rural areas. Do not use electrical appliances, ESPECIALLY corded telephones unless it is an emergency (cordless and cell phones are safe



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avoid contact with any conducting paths leading to the outside of the vehicle (e.g. radios, CB's, ignition, etc.).

to use).

Computers are also dangerous as they usually are connected to both phone and electrical cords. Do not take a shower or bath or use a hot tub.