

Are You Ready for a Thunderstorm?

Here's what you can do to prepare yourself and your family

Before Lightning Strikes...

- Keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of light, or increasing wind. Listen for the sound of thunder.
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning. Go to safe shelter immediately!
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for the latest weather forecasts.

When a Storm Approaches...

- Find shelter in a building or car. Keep car windows closed and avoid convertibles.
- Telephone lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity. Unplug appliances. Avoid using the telephone or any electrical appliances.
- Avoid taking a bath or shower, or running water for any other purpose.
- Turn off the air conditioner. Power surges from lightning can overload the compressor, resulting in a costly repair job!
- Draw blinds and shades over windows. If windows break due to objects blown by the wind, the shades will prevent glass from shattering into your home.

If Caught Outside...

- If you are in the woods, take shelter under the shorter trees.
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter immediately!

Protect Yourself Outside...

- Go to a low-lying, open place away from trees, poles, or metal objects.
- Make sure the place you pick is not subject to flooding.

Be a Very Small Target!

- Squat low to the ground. Place your hands on your knees with your head between them. Make yourself the smallest target possible.
- Do not lie flat on the ground -- this will make you a larger target!

After the Storm Passes...

- Stay away from storm-damaged areas.
- Listen to the radio for information and instructions.

If Someone is Struck by Lightning...

- People struck by lightning carry no electrical charge and can be handled safely.
- Call for help. Get someone to dial 9-1-1 or your local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) number.
- The injured person has received an electrical shock and may be burned, both where they were struck and where the electricity left their body. Check for burns in both places.
- Give first aid. If breathing has stopped, begin rescue breathing. If the heart has stopped beating, a trained person should give CPR.

Learn First Aid and CPR

- Take a Red Cross first aid and CPR course.