



Lightning Safety Awareness

Summer is a great time to enjoy the outdoors. However, it's also the peak season for thunderstorms and lightning. It is a good idea to review the dangers associated with lightning.



According to the National Weather Service, each year many people are injured or lose their lives after being hit by lightning. The American Red Cross has some steps your family can take to remain safe during a lightning storm:

- 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. If thunder roars, go indoors.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for the latest weather forecasts and emergency updates.

If a storm is approaching:

- Find shelter in a building or car. Keep car windows closed and avoid convertibles. Get out of mobile homes that can blow over in high winds.
- Unplug appliances. Avoid using the telephone or any electrical appliances. Use battery-powered TVs and radios instead.
- 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 you are caught outside during a storm:

- Try to reach a safe building.
- Avoid high ground; water; tall, isolated trees; and metal objects such as fences or bleachers.
- Picnic shelters, dugouts and sheds are NOT safe.
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter immediately!
- Make sure the place you pick is not subject to flooding.

When the storm is over:

- Never drive through a flooded roadway. Turn around, don't drown!
- Stay away from storm-damaged areas.
- Listen to the radio for information and instructions.

If someone is struck by lightning:

- 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 or have other injuries. People who have been struck by lightning do not retain an electrical charge and can be handled safely.
- Give first aid. If breathing has stopped, begin rescue breathing. If the heart has stopped beating, a trained person should give Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). If the person has a pulse and is breathing, look and care for other possible injuries.

Contact your local Red Cross chapter if you are interested in taking a Red Cross first aid and CPR course. For more information on how to keep you and your loved ones safe during emergencies, visit www.RedCross.org.

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and counsels victims of disasters; provides nearly half of the nation's blood supply; teaches lifesaving skills; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its humanitarian mission. For more information, please visit www.redcross.org or join our blog at www.redcrosschat.org.