

Did you know that eighty five percent of lightning victims are children and young men ages 10-35 engaged in recreation or work? Twenty percent of strike victims die and 70% of survivors suffer serious long-term after effects. Beyond this an unknown number of injuries do not require hospitalization. Lightning is responsible for many serious injuries and deaths each year, but there are precautions you can take to protect yourself.

Plan in advance your evacuation and safety measures. When you first see lightning or hear thunder, activate your emergency plan. Now is the time to go to a building or a vehicle. Lightning often precedes rain, so don't wait for the rain to begin before suspending activities.

IF OUTDOORS:

Avoid water. Avoid the high ground. Avoid open spaces. Avoid all metal objects including: electric wires, fences, machinery, motors, power tools, etc. Unsafe places include underneath canopies, small picnic or rain shelters, or near trees. Where possible, find shelter in a substantial building or in a fully enclosed metal vehicle such as a car, truck or a van with the windows completely shut. If lightning is striking nearby when you are outside, you should:

- **Crouch down.** Put feet together. Place hands over ears to minimize hearing damage from thunder
- **Avoid proximity** (minimum of 15 ft.) to other people

IF INDOORS:

Avoid water. Stay away from doors and windows. Do not use the telephone. Take off head sets. Turn off, unplug, and stay away from appliances, computers, power tools, & TV sets. Lightning may strike exterior electric and phone lines, inducing shocks to inside equipment.

- **Suspend activities** for 30 minutes after the last observed lightning or thunder
- **Injured persons** do not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely. Apply First Aid procedures to a lightning victim if you are qualified to do so. Call 911 or send for help immediately
- **Know your emergency telephone numbers**

There is no Utopia in lightning safety. Common misconceptions include: "Lightning never strikes twice in the same place" and "Lightning rods prevent lightning strikes." The ignorance and misinformation about lightning safety increase lightning's social cost in deaths and injuries.

Reference: National Lightning Safety Institute, Louisville, CO.

This information may not address all hazardous conditions at your location and does not warrant workplace safety or compliance with federal, state or local laws.