

# SEVERE STORM SAFETY

## 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 TV for the latest weather forecasts.

## When a Severe Storm Approaches...

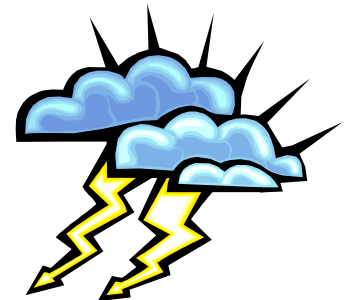
- ◆ Find shelter in a building or car. Keep car windows closed and avoid convertibles.
- ◆ Telephone lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity. Unplug appliances. Avoid using the telephone or any electrical appliances. (Leaving electric lights on does not increase the chances of your home being struck by lightning.)
- ◆ 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.

## Protecting Yourself Outside...

- ◆ If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter immediately!
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Do not lie flat on the ground.

## 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 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. Being struck by lightning can also cause nervous system damage, broken bones, and loss of hearing or eyesight.
- ◆ Give first aid. If breathing has stopped, begin rescue breathing. If the heart has stopped beating, a trained person should give CPR. If the person has a pulse and is breathing, look and care for other possible injuries. Learn first aid and CPR by taking a Red Cross First Aid and CPR course.



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