



Governor John R. Kasich

American Red Cross
Emergency Management Association of Ohio
National Weather Service
Ohio Citizen Corps
Ohio Department of Aging
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal
Ohio Department of Education

Ohio Department of Health
Ohio Department of Insurance
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Department of Public Safety -Ohio EMA
Ohio Department of Transportation
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**WHEN THUNDER ROARS, GO INDOORS!
Lightning Safety Awareness Week is June 24-30**

COLUMBUS, OH – In a coordinated effort with the National Weather Service, the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness promotes June 24-30 as Lightning Safety Awareness Week, and encourages all Ohioans to practice lightning and severe storm safety and preparedness throughout the summer.

According to the National Weather Service (NWS), there have been four lightning fatalities this year: two men in Louisiana, a 12-year-old boy in Alabama, and a man in Florida. All were outside either playing or fishing and had inadequate shelter. Twenty-six people died of lightning strikes in 2011, including one man in Westchester, Ohio. Twenty-nine people died in 2010.

Although the number of lightning fatalities has decreased over the years, lightning continues to be one of the top three storm-related killers in the country.

There is no safe place outside during a thunderstorm. The best way to protect oneself from lightning is to avoid the threat. Performing this simple measure can dramatically reduce the chance of severe injury or death during a storm: ***When thunder roars, go indoors.***

Ohio averages 30-50 days of thunderstorm activity annually, with summertime as its peak season. The purpose of Lightning Safety Awareness Week is to help safeguard people from the hazards of lightning and to lower the number of deaths and injuries caused by lightning strikes. Have a lightning safety plan. Check weather forecasts daily. Cancel or postpone outdoor activities if thunderstorms are predicted.

The NWS and Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness suggest the following lightning safety measures:

Watch for developing thunderstorms – Thunderstorms are most likely to develop on spring or summer days, but can also occur at night and during any season. Listen to local weather reports on radio or television stations. Know the difference between storm watches and warnings. Purchase a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert that notifies when hazardous weather is in or near your area.

Seek shelter before an approaching thunderstorm – Lightning can strike as far as 10 miles away from where it's raining. If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance. Seek immediate shelter. The sound of thunder travels about 1 mile every five seconds. If you count the seconds between the flash of lightning and the crack of thunder and divide by 5, it will equal the number of miles the lightning is from you (10 seconds = 2 miles).

“Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness”

www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

Protect your pets – Outside dog houses are not lightning-safe. Dogs that are chained to trees or wire runners have no protection from lightning. Bring your pets inside during thunderstorms.

Minimize your risk – Most lightning strikes occur during the summer when people are participating in outdoor recreational activities. At the first clap of thunders, stop outdoor activities and try to find indoor shelter immediately. If swimming, boating or fishing, get away from the water as quickly as possible. Find shelter in a substantial building (such as a home, school, office building or shopping center) or a hard-topped vehicle. Picnic shelters, car ports, baseball dugouts and convertible vehicles are not safe shelters during thunder and lightning storms. Do not use electrical equipment. Stay away from water/plumbing sources. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last sound of thunder before going outside again.

Helping someone struck by lightning – If a person is struck by lightning, call 911 and seek immediate medical attention. A lightning victim does not carry an electrical charge and is safe to touch. Knowing and implementing first aid measures, which include cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), can help a person struck by lightning survive. Local American Red Cross chapters and fire departments often offer first aid and CPR classes.

For additional information on lightning safety, visit the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness site at www.weathersafety.ohio.gov or the NWS site at www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov.

OCSWA is comprised of 14 organizations and state agencies that are dedicated in teaching Ohioans severe weather safety and preparedness.

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