

READY TOGETHER FOUNDATION
COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS RESOURCE LIBRARY

RTF-118

Lightning Safety Guide

A Practical Guide to Protecting Your Family Before, During, and After
Lightning Storms

Building Resilient Communities Together

Lightning Is Powerful and Unpredictable

Lightning can strike miles away from a storm and can cause serious injury, fires, and damage to homes and infrastructure.

Every thunderstorm produces lightning, making awareness and preparation essential for every family.

Knowing what to do before, during, and after a lightning storm can save lives.

When thunder roars, go indoors.

Why Lightning Safety Matters

Preparing for lightning helps your family:

- Reduce the risk of injury or death.
- Protect your home and electrical equipment.
- Know where to find safe shelter.
- Respond confidently during thunderstorms.
- Stay informed until conditions improve.

Preparation starts before the first thunder is heard.

Before a Thunderstorm

Take these important steps:

- ☐ Monitor local weather forecasts.
- ☐ Sign up for emergency weather alerts.
- ☐ Identify safe indoor shelter locations.
- ☐ Prepare flashlights in case of power outages.
- ☐ Secure outdoor items that may become hazardous in strong winds.
- ☐ Review your family emergency communication plan.

Prepared families stay aware of changing weather conditions.

Recognize the Danger

Lightning can strike:

- ☐ Before heavy rain begins.
- ☐ During a storm.
- ☐ Several miles away from the center of the storm.

If you hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning.

Do not wait until rain begins to seek shelter.

During a Lightning Storm

If you are indoors:

- ☐ Stay inside a substantial building.
- ☐ Stay away from windows and doors.
- ☐ Avoid using corded electrical appliances.
- ☐ Avoid plumbing such as showers or sinks if practical.
- ☐ Unplug sensitive electronics before the storm if it is safe to do so.

Remain indoors until at least 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder.

If You Are Outdoors

If you are outside:

- ☐ Seek shelter immediately in a substantial building or enclosed vehicle.
- ☐ Avoid open fields.
- ☐ Stay away from tall isolated trees.
- ☐ Leave beaches, lakes, rivers, and swimming pools immediately.
- ☐ Stay away from metal fences and utility poles.

There is no safe place outdoors during a lightning storm.

If You Are Driving

If you are in your vehicle:

- ☐ Stay inside the vehicle.
- ☐ Pull over safely if visibility becomes poor.
- ☐ Avoid flooded roads.
- ☐ Wait until the storm passes before continuing.

Your vehicle can provide protection when properly enclosed.

After the Storm

When the storm has passed:

- ☐ Wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder before going outside.
- ☐ Check your property for storm damage.
- ☐ Watch for downed power lines.
- ☐ Report hazards to local authorities.
- ☐ Assist others if it is safe to do so.

Recovery begins with safety.

Lightning Injuries

If someone is struck by lightning:

- ☐ Call 911 immediately.
- ☐ It is safe to touch the person.
- ☐ Begin first aid or CPR if you are trained and it is needed.

- ☐ Follow instructions from emergency responders.

Lightning injuries require immediate medical attention.

Protecting Children

Teach children:

- ☐ What thunder and lightning mean.
- ☐ To go indoors immediately when thunder is heard.
- ☐ Never to shelter under trees.
- ☐ To stay away from water during storms.

Prepared children make safer choices.

Caring for Pets

Protect your pets by:

- ☐ Bringing them indoors before storms arrive.
- ☐ Providing a safe indoor shelter.
- ☐ Keeping identification tags current.
- ☐ Ensuring fresh water is available.

Pets depend on you for their safety.

Ready Together Action

Complete these three steps this week:

- ☐ Identify the safest shelter at home, school, and work.
- ☐ Practice your family's lightning safety plan.
- ☐ Sign up for local weather alerts if you have not already done so.

Prepared families act before storms arrive.

Review Your Lightning Preparedness

Review your plan:

- ☐ Before storm season.
- ☐ Every six months.
- ☐ After moving.
- ☐ After changes in your household.

Preparedness is an ongoing commitment.

About Ready Together Foundation

Ready Together Foundation is dedicated to building resilient communities through emergency preparedness, emergency relief and response, youth engagement, and outreach to vulnerable populations.

Our work focuses on:

- Community Emergency Preparedness
- Emergency Relief & Response
- Youth Preparedness & Leadership
- Vulnerable Population Outreach

Together, we are building stronger, safer, and more resilient communities.

Ready Together Foundation

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Preparedness is a journey, not a one-time event. Every small step you take today helps protect the people you care about tomorrow.