



THUNDERSTORM SAFETY

Lightning, one of nature's most spectacular wonders, is also one of its most deadly and common sights. It is estimated that lightning strikes the earth 100 times each second!

Deaths and injuries from lightning can be avoided if people take the proper precautions. One important thing to remember, all thunderstorms produce lightning.

If lightning threatens, move indoors. Once inside, avoid doors, windows, and metal objects. Avoid using electrical appliances. Use the telephone only in an emergency.

If driving, stay in your automobile. An enclosed automobile offers reasonably good protection from lightning.

Outdoors, stay away from isolated trees. If your hair stands on end or your skin tingles, lightning may be about to strike. Crouch down quickly and make a low target.

Thunderstorms also can produce strong wind gusts. These straight-line winds have been known to reach 100 miles an hour. For this reason, you should treat severe thunderstorms just as you would tornadoes. Move to appropriate shelter if in the path of the storm.

The strong outburst of wind from a thunderstorm is often called a downburst. One of the primary causes is rain cooled air. The rain cooled air accelerates downward rapidly producing a potentially damaging gust of wind.

Strong downbursts are often mistaken for tornadoes. They can produce extensive damage and are often accompanied by a roaring sound similar to a tornado. Downbursts can easily overturn mobile homes, tear roofs off houses, and topple trees.