

ARE YOU READY?

Winter 2007

THUNDERSTORMS AND LIGHTNING

All thunderstorms are dangerous. Every thunderstorm produces lightning. In the United States, an average of 300 people are injured and 80 people are killed each year by lightning. Although most lightning victims survive, people struck by lightning often report a variety of long-term debilitating symptoms.

Other associated dangers of thunderstorms include tornadoes, strong winds, hail, and flash flooding.

Facts about Thunderstorms

- They may occur singly, in clusters, or in lines.
- Some of the most severe occur when a single thunderstorm affects one loca-

- tion for an extended time.
- Thunderstorms typically produce heavy rain for a brief period, anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour.
 - Warm, humid conditions are highly favorable for thunderstorm development.
 - About 10 percent of thunderstorms are classified as severe—one that produces hail at least three-quarters of an inch in diameter.

Facts about Lightning

- Lightning's unpredictability increases the risk to individuals and property.
- Lightning often strikes outside of heavy rain and may occur as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall.

- "Heat lightning" is actually lightning from a thunderstorm too far away for thunder to be heard. However, the storm may be moving in your direction.
- Most lightning deaths and injuries occur when people are caught outdoors in the summer months during the afternoon and evening.
- Your chances of being struck by lightning are estimated to be 1 in 600,000, but could be reduced even further by following safety precautions.
- Lightning strike victims carry no electrical charge and should be attended to immediately.

KNOW THE TERMS

Severe Thunderstorm Watch

Tells you when and where severe thunderstorms are likely to occur. Watch the sky and stay tuned to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning

Issued when severe weather has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar. Warnings indicate imminent danger to life and property to those in the path of the storm.

Important Phone Numbers:

Winfield Township-Supervisor

- 630-231-3591

Winfield Township-Assessor

- 630-231-3573

Winfield Township-Highway

- 630-231-8850

West Chicago Fire Dept.

- 630-231-2123

West Chicago Police Dept.

- 630-293-2222

West Chicago City Hall

- 630-293-2200

Warrenville Fire Dept.

- 630-393-1381

Warrenville Police Dept.

- 630-393-2131

Warrenville City Hall

- 630-393-9427

Winfield Fire Dept.

- 630-653-5050

Winfield Police Dept.

- 630-933-7160

Winfield City Hall

- 630-933-7100

Wheaton Fire Dept.

- 630-260-2175

Wheaton Police Dept.

- 630-260-2161

Wheaton City Hall

- 630-260-2000

Aurora Fire Dept.

- 630-897-7821

Aurora Police Dept.

- 630-859-1700

Aurora City Hall

- 630-844-4870

DuPage Co. Sheriff's Office

- 630-407-2400

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TAKE PROTECTIVE MEASURES

To prepare for a thunderstorm you should do the following:

- Remove dead or rotting trees and branches that could fall and cause injury or damage during a severe thunderstorm.
- Remember the 30/30 lightning safety rule: Go indoors if, after seeing lightning, you cannot count to 30 before hearing thunder. Stay indoors for 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder.

The following are guidelines for what you should do if a thunderstorm is likely in your area:

- Postpone outdoor activities.
- Get inside a home, building, or hard top automobile (not a convertible). Although you may be injured if lightning strikes your car, you are much safer inside a vehicle than outside.
- Remember, rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide NO protection from lightning.

However, the steel frame of a hard-topped vehicle provides increased protection if you are not touching metal.

- Secure outdoor objects that could blow away or cause damage.
- Shutter windows and secure outside doors. If shutters are not available, close window blinds, shades, and curtains.
- Avoid showering or bathing. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.
- Use a corded telephone only for emergencies. Cordless and cellular telephones are safe to use.
- Unplug appliances and other electrical items such as computers; and turn off air conditioners. Power surges from lightning can cause serious damage.
- Use your battery-operated NOAA Weather updates from local officials.

DURING A THUNDERSTORM

If you are:	Then:
In a forest	Seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees.
In an open area	Go to a low place such as a ravine or valley. Be alert for flash floods.
On open water	Get to land and find shelter immediately.
Anywhere you feel your hair stand on end (which indicates that lightning is about to strike)	Squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands over your ears and your head between your knees. Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact with the ground. DO NOT lie flat on the ground.