THUNDERSTORM SAFETY

BE PREPARED FOR SUMMER BY KNOWING THESE FACTS AND TIPS

Facts:

- The energy from one bolt of lightning could light a 100-watt light bulb for more than three months.
- Lightning is caused by an unbalanced electrical charge in the atmosphere.
- The air around a bolt of lightning reaches temperatures up to 50,000°F, which is hotter than the surface of the sun.
- Lightning can strike up to 30 miles away from a storm and is called a “Bolt from the Blue.”
- When lightning strikes sand, it fuses together to create a hollow tube called a fulgurite.
- Lightning CAN strike the same place twice, and does so often, especially with tall, pointed objects.
- There are bolts of lightning striking somewhere on Earth every single second.
- The fear of lightning and thunder is called “Astraphobia.”
- Lightning types:
  - Cloud-to-cloud or intra-cloud lightning
  - Cloud-to-ground lightning
  - Spider lightning is long, horizontally-traveling flashes that travel on the underside of clouds
  - Sprite lightning extends above the top of a storm in coordination with a positive cloud-to-ground lightning stroke
- A flash of lightning actually consists of as much as 20 return strokes or individual flashes.
- Around 70 percent of lightning occurs in the tropics.
- Males are significantly more likely to be struck by lightning than females.
- July is the month with the most lightning fatalities.

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Tips:

• If you can hear thunder, lightning is close enough to strike you.

• No place outdoors is safe when lightning is occurring. If you hear thunder, get inside as quickly as possible.

• Lightning will follow the shortest route to the ground and will strike the tallest object in the vicinity.

• Trees can often be the tallest objects around, so taking shelter from rain or hail under them is not safe.

• Vehicles are safe places to take shelter because they direct electrical current through the metal frame and into the ground. Just don’t lean on the doors!

• Stay away from electronics, plumbing, corded phones, and anything metal during a storm. Lightning can use those as conductors of electricity.

• Water is also a conductor of electricity, so immediately exit the pool or any other body of water during a thunderstorm.