



## Thunderstorm Safety

### THUNDERSTORM SAFETY

Approaching thunderstorms may be noted by a sudden reverse in wind direction, a noticeable rise in wind speed, and a sharp drop in temperature. Rain, hail and lightning occur only in the mature stage of a thunderstorm.

### SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Observe the 30/30 rule: If you see lightning and hear the thunderclaps follow in less than 30 seconds, take the storm precautions identified below. Do not resume work in exposed areas until 30 minutes after storm activity has passed.

### HAZARD CONTROL

- Take shelter in a vehicle or building if possible.
- If outdoors, find a low spot away from tall trees, wire fences, utility lines and other elevated conductive objects. Make sure the place you pick is not subject to flooding.
- If in the woods, move to an area with shorter trees.
- If only isolated trees are nearby, keep your distance from twice the tree height.
- If in open country, crouch low, with feet together, minimizing contact with the ground. You can use a pack to sit on, but never lay on the ground.
- If you feel your skin tingle or your hair stand on end, immediately crouch low to the ground. Make yourself the smallest possible target and minimize your contact with the ground.
- Don't group together.
- Don't stay on ridge tops, wide open areas, or near ledges or rock outcroppings.
- Don't operate landline telephones, machinery or electric motors.
- Don't handle flammable materials in open containers or metal hand tools.



## **AVOID THE FOLLOWING:**

- Natural lightning rods, such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area.
- Hilltops, open fields, the beach or a boat on the water.
- Isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas.
- Anything metal: tractors, farm equipment, motorcycles, golf carts, golf clubs and bicycles.

## **HOW TO GIVE AID TO A LIGHTNING VICTIM:**

- Call 911 for medical assistance as soon as possible.
- Check breathing: If breathing has stopped, begin mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
- Check heartbeat: If heart has stopped, administer CPR.
- Check pulse: If the victim has a pulse and is breathing, look for other possible injuries.
- Check for burns where the lightning entered and left the body.

Also be alert for nervous system damage, broken bones and loss of hearing and eyesight.

For more preparedness information visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) and locally the [Montgomery County Emergency Preparedness page](#)