



# Lightning Safety



*Lightning kills over 100 people annually in the U.S. and 500 more are severely injured each year. Staying safe during times of inclement weather is your responsibility and one you should take seriously. Your life depends on it!*

*More information:*      **City of Riverside Fire Department  
Office of Emergency Management  
(951) 320-8100**

- Lightning occurs in all thunderstorms; each year lightning strikes the Earth 20 million times.
- Most lightning fatalities and injuries occur when people are caught outdoors in the summer months during the afternoon and evening.
- Lightning can occur from cloud-to-cloud, within a cloud, cloud-to-ground, or cloud-to-air.
- When severe storms threaten, the safest place to be is indoors. If you are outdoors, seek shelter in a home, large building or automobile, if possible. Do not take shelter in sheds or small buildings located in open areas.
- Postpone outdoor activities if thunderstorms are imminent. This is your best way to avoid being caught in a dangerous situation.
- Avoid high objects that may attract lightning. Stay away from tall isolated trees, telephone poles, or communications antennas. And avoid being taller than your surroundings by standing on an open hilltop.
- Do not take a shower or bath during a lightning storm.
- Do not use the telephone unless you have a true emergency.
- If outdoors, avoid contact with metal surfaces and do not carry anything made of metal. Stay away from metal fencing and pipes, as these objects are conductors of electricity. Also avoid contact with metal farm equipment or small metal vehicles (such as golf carts).
- If lightning is occurring and a sturdy shelter is not available, get inside a hard top automobile and keep the windows up. Avoid touching any metal.
- Stay away from railroad tracks.
- When outdoors in an open area, seek shelter in a low spot such as a gully. If you are in a wooded area, seek shelter in a thick cluster of small trees.
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter immediately.
- Just before lightning strikes, your hair may begin to stand on end. Immediately drop to your knees and make your body into a ball, making as little contact with the ground as possible. Don't lie flat – the wet ground can conduct electricity.

**CITY OF RIVERSIDE - OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
(951) 320-8100  
[www.ReadyRiverside.com](http://www.ReadyRiverside.com)**