



Governor John R. Kasich

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SUMMERTIME IS PEAK TIME FOR THUNDER AND LIGHTNING STORMS
Lightning Safety Awareness Week is June 21-27

COLUMBUS, OH – In an annual coordinated effort with the National Weather Service, the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness is promoting June 21-27 as Lightning Safety Awareness Week and encourages all Ohioans to know what to do before, during and after thunderstorms, and to practice severe weather safety and preparedness throughout the summer.

According to the National Weather Service (NWS), as of June 10, there have been six lightning fatalities this year: two in North Carolina, and one each in Iowa, Florida, New Mexico and West Virginia. All were outside; two were female. A total of 26 people in 14 states died of lightning strikes in 2014 – no one from Ohio.

Although the number of lightning fatalities over the last five years is lower than the estimated average, lightning strikes continue to be one of the most storm-related killers in the United States. It is important to note that lightning injures more people than it kills.

When thunderstorms threaten, get to a safe place. Lightning safety is an inconvenience that can save your life. So, “*When thunder roars, go indoors!*” Stop outdoor activities and seek shelter immediately.

Summertime is peak season for thunderstorm activity in Ohio. Preparedness for thunderstorms – or any severe weather incident – is key.

The NWS and Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness also provide the following lightning safety information:

- **Have a lightning safety plan.** Know where you’ll go for safety and how much time it will take to get there.
- **Postpone outdoor activities.** Before going outdoors, check the weather forecast. Consider postponing activities to avoid being caught in a dangerous situation.
- **Monitor the weather.** Look for signs of a developing thunderstorm such as darkening skies, flashes of lightning or increasing wind.
- **Get to a safe place.** If you hear thunder, even a distant rumble, move to a safe place.
 - Fully enclosed buildings with wiring and plumbing provide the best protection.
 - Sheds, picnic shelters, baseball dugouts, tents or covered porches DO NOT protect you from lightning. If a sturdy building is not nearby, get into a hard-topped vehicle and close all the windows.
- **Stay in safe shelter** at least 30 minutes after you hear the last sound of thunder.

“Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness”

www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

- **Do not use corded, landline phone during thunderstorms.** Avoid using corded phones, computers and other electrical equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity.
- **Water pipes conduct electricity.** Avoid plumbing – including sinks, baths and faucets.
- **Stay away from windows and doors.** Do not lie on concrete floors or lean against concrete walls.

If caught outside during a thunderstorm with no safe shelter nearby, the following actions may reduce the risk of getting struck by lightning:

- Do not stay on elevated areas such as hills, mountain ridges or peaks
- Do not lie flat on the ground
- Do not take shelter under an isolated tree
- Immediately get out of bodies of water such as ponds, lakes and pools
- Stay away from objects that conduct electricity (barbed wire, fences, power lines, windmills, etc.)

For additional information on lightning safety, visit the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness site at www.weathersafety.ohio.gov or the NWS site at www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov.

OCSWA is comprised of 16 organizations and state agencies that are dedicated in teaching Ohioans severe weather safety and preparedness.

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