

GUIDELINES FOR AN OUTDOOR EVENT, LIGHTNING SAFETY PLAN

Who is the lightning spotter?

Use multiple spotters. Both on-site and at-home spotters provide an extra measure of safety by keeping a weather eye on the sky watching for the threat of lightning and other severe weather. At home spotters can watch a real-time southwest Ohio lightning map and call on-site personnel to provide an early warning that a storm containing lightning is approaching, say within 30 miles. On-site spotters should pay much more attention to the threat of lightning than the threat of rain.

What warning devices to use?

- Check the weather forecast 24 hr in advance and during the activity using your NOAA all hazards radio, AM-FM Radio or TV.
- Lightning Detection Map (Watch a real-time Southwest Ohio lightning map)
- Thor Guard Lightning detection and warning system is recommended. A hand-held personal lightning detector is not recommended and should not be used as a warning device
- Your Eyes & Ears (If you see lightning, seek shelter or if you hear thunder, seek safe shelter immediately)

What safety rule will stop the activity?

- How much early warning do you require for the orderly movement of people to their safe shelter?
- How many people go where?

Where will you seek safe shelter?

- **Vehicle** Are there a sufficient number of vehicles to hold everyone? Often people are dropped off for the event and an insufficient number of vehicles remain as a safe shelter.
- **Building** Is the event on a weekend or in the evening when the buildings are locked?

How will you get to the safe shelter?

- What is the safest path to the shelter? Are you required to walk near the base of a cell-phone tower, a flagpole, a goalpost, a scoreboard or other tall object that may be a target for lightning? If this condition exists look for a safer path to your safe shelter. A strike to a tall object like a flagpole can redistribute the energy across the surface of the ground at the base of the tall object making it very dangerous to be there, even deadly.

Where to go inside the safe shelter?

- **Vehicle** Close all windows, move to the center of a hardtop vehicle, do not touch any metal and stay off the 2-way radio connected to an outside antenna.
- **Building** Go to the center of the lower level of a substantial structure containing plumbing and/or electrical wiring. Avoid contact with any metallic connection to the outside such as plumbing, electrical, showers, bathrooms, kitchen, laundry room, cable-TV and corded telephones. Prevent people from using a corded phone. If telephone use is necessary encourage a portable phone or cell phone used on the lower level of the structure. Telephone lines present a good antenna for electrical pickup from the magnetic field of a nearby lightning strike in addition to the susceptibility of a direct strike.

When to resume the activity?

- After the signals have blown (ThorGuard Lightning Warning System)
- 30 minutes after the last sight of lightning or sound of thunder.