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Ohio Department of Education  
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Ohio Department of Insurance

Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
Ohio Emergency Management Agency  
Emergency Management Association of Ohio  
Ohio Insurance Institute  
Ohio News Network  
Division of the State Fire Marshal

**Bob Taft, Governor of Ohio**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **GOVERNOR PROCLAIMS JUNE 19-25 “OHIO LIGHTNING SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK”**

*Summer is Peak Season for one of the Nation’s Deadliest Weather Phenomena*

**COLUMBUS, OH** – To help promote effective emergency preparedness for lightning and severe thunderstorms, Governor Bob Taft designated June 19-25, 2005 as “Lightning Safety Awareness Week.” The governor’s resolution comes in conjunction with the National Weather Service’s proclamation of National Lightning Safety Awareness Week.

“The best defense when faced with severe weather warnings is preparedness,” said Governor Taft. “I urge all Ohio families to take a moment to discuss weather safety and make this summer a safe one.”

Lightning Safety Awareness Week aims to help educate people about the hazards of lightning and to lower deaths and injuries due to lightning strikes. According to the National Weather Service, nearly 40 million lightning strikes occur each year, resulting in nearly 100 deaths. Annually lightning kills more people than tornadoes.

The Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness encourages Ohioans to learn and practice these important lightning facts and safety tips:

- **If you can hear thunder, you are in danger.** Lightning usually accompanies dark cloud-based storms with increased winds and can strike as far as 10 miles away from any thunderstorm. If you hear thunder, take cover.
- **Don’t wait for the rain; postpone outdoor activities promptly.** Most people struck by lightning are not in the rain. If a storm is developing, go quickly inside a completely enclosed building; not a carport, open garage or covered patio. If a building is not available, seek shelter inside a hard-topped vehicle.
- **Be the lowest point.** Lightning strikes the tallest object. If you are in an exposed area, crouch down. Try not to be the highest object. If possible, stay away from trees.
- **Stay out of water.** Pools of water, even puddles are conductors of electricity. Do not swim, fish or boat during a storm. Lightning can strike water and travel some distance beneath and away from its point of contact. If caught in a storm in a boat, crouch down in the center of the boat away from metal hardware.
- **Listen to your NOAA Weather Radio or local radio or TV station** to receive up-to-date information about severe thunderstorm watches and warnings. Severe thunderstorms are storms with winds of at least 58 mph or hail three-fourths of an inch or larger in diameter.

For additional information on lightning safety, visit [www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/](http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/), and the Spring 2005 Severe Weather Awareness preparedness guide at [www.ema.ohio.gov/Weather.htm](http://www.ema.ohio.gov/Weather.htm).

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