



Northeast Public Power Association Safety Corner

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Thunder and Lightning Storm Awareness

Lightning, high winds, heavy rains and hail are only part of the danger. Thunderstorms have tremendous destructive power. Each year lightning kills 300 people and injures another 80 in the United States alone. In addition to lightning, thunderstorms produce heavy rains which lead to flash flooding, hail, tornadoes, and strong downbursts of winds called microbursts that are capable of pushing an airliner in flight down to the ground.

Even if you don't live in an area that's prone to thunderstorms, it is still important to be prepared because they are unpredictable. Thunderstorms can pop up any time with devastating results. Don't take thunderstorms lightly. Remember the rule, "When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!" because there is no safe place outdoors when lightning is in the area.

What to Do to Prepare

- Create an emergency supply kit, which includes items like non-perishable food, water, a battery-powered or hand crank radio, extra flashlights and batteries.
- Make a family emergency plan and inform babysitters and caregivers of your plan. "Get Prepared, Make a Plan and Make a Kit"
- Outside the house you should remove dead or rotting trees and branches that could fall and cause injury or damage during a severe thunderstorm.
- Look around and secure loose objects that could blow away or cause damage.

What to Do During

- Remember the 30/30 Lightning Safety Rule: If you cannot count to 30 after seeing lightning before hearing thunder, go indoors, avoid windows and doors and stay off porches. Remain indoors for 30 minutes after hearing the last clap of thunder.
- Avoid contact with corded phones. Use a corded telephone only for emergencies. Cordless telephones and cellphones are safe to use
- Avoid contact with electrical equipment or cords. If you are planning to unplug any electronic equipment, do so well before the storms arrives
- Avoid contact with plumbing. Do not wash your hands, do not take a shower, do not wash dishes, and do not do laundry. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.
- Do not lie on concrete floors and do not lean against concrete wall.
- Do not become careless after a storm and let your Safety Guard Down. Just because you can't see any apparent danger doesn't mean there isn't any. For example, downed power lines may still be energized. Treat them with respect to avoid being electrocuted. Do Not Move The Power Lines!! Call the Electric Company when it is safe to do so.



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