



Governor Ted Strickland

American Red Cross
Emergency Management Association of Ohio
National Weather Service
Ohio Citizen Corps
Ohio Department of Aging
Ohio Department of Commerce-State Fire Marshal
Ohio News Network

Ohio Department of Education
Ohio Department of Health
Ohio Department of Insurance
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio Department of Public Safety-Ohio EMA
Ohio Insurance Institute

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**National Weather Service's Safety Message: When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!
Lightning Safety Awareness Week is June 22-28**

COLUMBUS, OH – In a coordinated effort with the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness in promoting safety and preparedness for severe thunder and lightning storms, Governor Ted Strickland proclaimed June 22-28, 2008 as “Lightning Safety Awareness Week.” The governor’s resolution is in conjunction with the National Weather Service’s National Lightning Safety Awareness Week.

The purpose of Lightning Safety Awareness Week is to help safeguard people from the hazards of lightning and thunderstorms. According to the National Weather Service, lightning is considered an underrated risk because it generally does not cause mass property destruction and may claim one or two victims per incident.

A study by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), shows that between 1998 and 2007, Ohio had 14 deaths resulting from lightning strikes, ranking Ohio the eighth highest in the nation. Florida had the highest number of deaths during that period: 74. Nationwide last year, 45 people were struck and killed by lightning.

“When it comes to severe weather safety and preparedness, education is essential,” said Gov. Strickland. “I applaud the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness for its dedication in helping Ohioans understand the dangers of lightning, thunderstorms, and other natural hazards that affect our great state.”

The National Weather Service’s safety slogan continues to be, “When thunder roars, go indoors!” Other safety tips promoted by the NWS and Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness are as follows:

Before Lightning Strikes –

- Keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening clouds, flashes of light or increasing wind. Listen for thunder.
- If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning. Find safe shelter immediately.
- Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or local television or radio station for up-to-date weather information.

When a Storm Approaches –

- Find shelter in a building or vehicle. Keep the vehicle’s windows closed and avoid convertibles.
- Telephone (land lines) and metal pipes can conduct electricity. Unplug appliances. Avoid using the phone, computer or electrical devices.
- Avoid taking a shower or bath or washing dishes. Water is an electrical conductor.
- Wait 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder before going back outside.

“Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness”

www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

If Caught Outside –

- If you are in the woods, take shelter under the shorter trees.
- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find immediate shelter.
- If you cannot find indoor shelter, find a low-lying open place away from trees, poles or metal objects. Make sure the place you pick is not subject to flooding.
- Be a small target. Do not lie flat on the ground; squat low to the ground by putting your head to your knees and placing your hands either behind your head or on your knees.

If Someone is Struck by Lightning –

- People struck by lightning carry no electrical charge and can be handled safely.
- Call 911 and get medical care immediately. Cardiac arrest, irregular heart beats, burns and nerve damage are common in cases where people are struck by lightning.
- Give first aid. If breathing has stopped, begin rescue breathing. If the heart has stopped, a trained person should administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). American Red Cross chapters and local fire departments often offer first aid and CPR classes.

Remember: When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

For additional information on lightning safety and severe weather preparedness, visit the following sites:

www.weathersafety.ohio.gov

www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/

www.redcross.org/services/disaster/ click on “Thunderstorms”

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