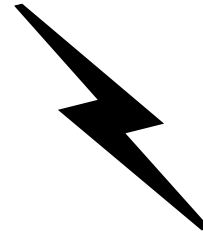


# Thunderstorm & Lightning Safety



## True Story

*A 10<sup>th</sup> grader was hospitalized after being hit by lightning at her school. Strong thunderstorms had rolled through the area and people were waiting inside the school for the storm to let up. The girl was hit by lightning in the parking lot when everyone rushed out to get into their cars.*

*-struckbylightning.org*

## The Facts

- Lightning is one of the nation's deadliest weather phenomena.
- In the US an average of 93 people are killed each year by lightning.
- Many more people are struck but survive with a variety of long-term symptoms including memory loss, attention deficits, sleep disorders, dizziness, depression and muscle spasms.

## What You Can Do

- Before going on a long hike check the weather forecast for the day.
- Buildings or cars are the safest place to be during a thunderstorm.
- If you cannot find a shelter, find a low place like a ditch and get into the "lightning safety position." Squat down near the ground with your heels touching and put your hands over your ears.
- Standing under a tree is *not* a safe place in a storm. If you are in the woods during a thunderstorm *do not* stand under the tallest trees.
- "Flash to bang" is a way to measure how far away a lightning strike was. The sound of thunder can go one mile in five seconds. Scientists say that if you are less than six miles away (if you hear thunder less than 30 seconds after seeing lightning), you are in the *high danger zone*.

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)



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Safe Kids Greater Des Moines, led by Blank Children's Hospital, is a grassroots organization dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children ages 0-14.

For more information call (515) 241-6293 or visit [www.dsmsafekids.org](http://www.dsmsafekids.org).

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