

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE RALEIGH NC
0800 AM EDT FRI JUN 27 2014

The National Weather Service has declared the week of June 22nd through 28th, LIGHTNING SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK. This is the last in a series of five public information statements to be issued by the National Weather Service office in Raleigh, NC containing information on lightning and lightning safety.

LIGHTNING SAFETY AROUND THE HOME

Although houses and other substantial buildings offer the best protection from lightning, each year many homes across the United States are struck by lightning. In fact, on average, lightning causes about 4400 house fires and 1800 other structural fires each year, some of which are deadly. All totaled, lightning causes nearly \$1 billion in damages each year.

There are three main ways lightning enters homes and buildings: (1) a direct strike, (2) through wires or pipes that extend outside the structure, and (3) through the ground. Regardless of the method of entrance, once in a structure, the lightning can travel through the electrical and phone wires, the plumbing, and/or radio and television reception systems.

Indoor safety depends on avoiding contact with items that could conduct lightning within the home. Here are some indoor safety tips to follow when a thunderstorm is in the area.

1. Don't touch electrical equipment or cords. If you plan to unplug any electronic equipment, do so WELL BEFORE the storm arrives.
2. Stay off corded phones.
3. Avoid contact with plumbing. Do not wash your hands, take a shower, wash dishes, or do laundry.
4. Stay away from windows and doors, and stay off porches.

In case your home is struck by lightning:

- Evacuate your home immediately if you smell smoke and call 911.
- Call your local fire department and, if possible, have them check for hot spots in your walls with thermal imaging equipment.
- Make sure all smoke detectors are powered and operating properly.
- If needed, have a licensed electrician check the wiring in your home

Lightning Question of the Day: What are lightning rods and how do they work?

Lightning rods protect a home from a direct lightning strike, but they do not prevent a home from being struck. They are designed to intercept lightning, to provide a conductive path for the harmful electrical discharge to follow, and to disperse the energy safely into the ground. While lightning rods help protect a structure from a direct lightning strike, a complete lightning protection system is needed to help prevent harmful electrical surges and possible fires caused by lightning entering a structure via wires and pipes. Lightning protection systems should be purchased from and installed by a certified lightning protection specialist.

Here's a list of topics that were covered earlier this.

MONDAY - Lightning and Lightning Safety -an Introduction

TUESDAY - Lightning's Most Deadly Activities

WEDNESDAY - Lightning Safety and Sports Activities

THURSDAY - Lightning Safety at Work

For additional information about lightning or lightning safety, visit NOAA's Lightning Safety Awareness web site at:

<http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov>

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