



Safety Tips

A five-minute training Series for Pest Management Professionals.



Personal Lightning Safety



There is no Utopia in lightning safety. The absence of objective data about lightning safety contributes to accidents and injuries. Common misconceptions include: "lightning never strikes twice in the same place" and "lightning rods prevent lightning strikes." Misinformation about lightning safety increases related deaths and injuries.

As noted below, lightning is one of the leading weather-related causes of deaths and injuries.

Table 1 - Annual average severe weather fatalities by decade from 1940-1991

Year	Lightning	Tornado	Flood	Hurricane
1940-1949	337	154	144	22
1950-1959	184	135	79	87
1960-1969	133	94	121	59
1970-1979	98	99	182	21
1980-1989	72	52	110	12
1990-1991	73	46	102	8
Total (51 yrs.)	8316	5731	5828	2031

source: National Weather Service, 1992. (7)

Eighty-five percent of lightning victims are children and young men ages 10-35 engaged in recreation or **work**. Twenty percent of strike victims die and 70% of survivors suffer serious long-term after effects.

What You Can Do:

1. PLAN in advance your evacuation and safety measures. When you first see lightning or hear thunder, go to a building or a vehicle. Lightning often precedes rain; so don't wait for the rain to begin before suspending activities.
2. IF OUTDOORS avoid water, high ground, and open spaces. Avoid all metal objects including electric wires, fences, machinery, motors, power tools, etc. If lightning is striking nearby when you are outside, you should:
 - A. Crouch down, put feet together and place your hands over your ears.
 - B. Avoid proximity (minimum of 15 ft.) to other people.
3. IF INDOORS avoid water and stay away from doors and windows. Do not use the telephone. Turn off, unplug, and stay away from appliances, computers and power tools. Lightning may strike electric and phone lines, inducing shocks to inside equipment.
4. INJURED PERSONS do not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely. Apply First Aid procedures to a lightning victim if you are qualified to do so. Call 911 or send for help immediately.