

**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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**Governor Strickland Proclaims June 21-27 Lightning Safety Awareness Week  
Remember, When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!**

COLUMBUS, OH – In a coordinated effort with the National Weather Service (NWS) and the Ohio Committee for Severe Weather Awareness, and in participation with national efforts, Governor Ted Strickland proclaimed June 21-27 as “Lightning Safety Awareness Week,” and encourages all Ohioans to practice lightning safety and preparedness this week and throughout the summer.

To date, according to the NWS, 14 people in the United States have died this year because of lightning strikes. Twenty-eight Americans died in 2008 because of lightning strikes. Ohio had two deaths resulting from lightning strikes last year, and was one of 18 states that reported lightning-related fatalities.

The purpose of Lightning Safety Awareness Week is to help safeguard people from the hazards of thunder and lightning storms. The NWS lightning safety slogan continues to be: “*When thunder roars, go indoors!*”

According to the NWS, there is no safe place outside during a thunderstorm. If you’re outside and hear thunder, you should seek shelter immediately – either inside a substantial building or a hard-topped vehicle. Other safety tips include:

- **Avoid open areas.** Don’t be the tallest object in the area.
- **Stay away from isolated tall trees, towers or utility poles.** Lightning tends to strike the taller objects in an area.
- **Stay away from metal conductors such as wires or fences.** Metal does not attract lightning, but lightning can travel long distances through it.
- **Monitor the weather.** Look for signs of a developing thunderstorm such as darkening skies, flashes of lightning or increasing winds. Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or local radio or television station for up-to-date storm and weather information.

Other lightning safety tips promoted by the NWS and OCSWA include:

- **Have a lightning safety plan.** Know where you’ll go for shelter and safety and know how much time it will take to get there.
- **Listen to weather reports.** Stay up to date on storm and weather information by listening to a NOAA Weather Radio or your local radio or television station.
- **Postpone activities.** Before going outside, check the forecast for thunderstorms. Consider postponing activities to avoid getting caught in a storm.

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“Teaching Ohioans Severe Weather Safety and Preparedness”

[www.weathersafety.ohio.gov](http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov)

- **If you hear thunder, get to a safe place.** If you even hear a distant rumble, find a safe place to shelter. Fully enclosed buildings provide the best protection. Sheds, picnic shelters, tents or covered porches DO NOT protect you from lightning. Wait 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder before going back outside.
- **Corded phones, metal pipes and electrical equipment can conduct electricity.** Cordless and cell phones are safer to use. Unplug appliances and avoid using land-line telephones, computers or electrical devices.
- **Stay away from water.** Avoid activities such as washing dishes, bathing, swimming or boating during thunderstorms. Water is an electrical conductor.

For additional information on lightning safety and severe weather preparedness, visit the following sites: [www.weathersafety.ohio.gov](http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov) and [www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov](http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov).

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