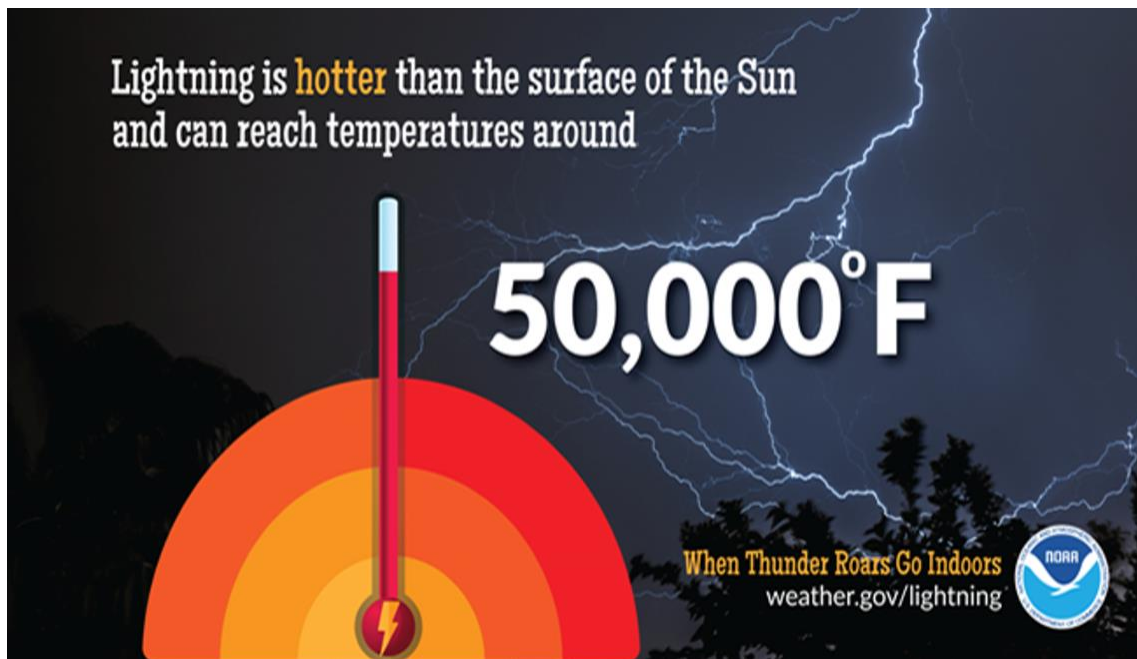


Ready PA *monthly*

✓ Be informed. ✓ Be prepared. ✓ Be involved.

A Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) digital newsletter

Ready PA Monthly - June 2024



Lightning Safety Awareness Week

When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!

Did you know that 140 lightning-related deaths have occurred in Pennsylvania since 1959? The most recent was in April 2023.

Pennsylvania, with its varied climate and geographical diversity, often experiences thunderstorms, making lightning safety a crucial concern for all. Understanding how to stay safe during thunderstorms can significantly reduce the risk of injury or death. Lightning can pose dangers inside and outside, so here are five safety tips for outdoors and five for indoors.

Outdoor Lightning Safety

If you find yourself outside when a thunderstorm approaches, immediate action is required to protect yourself. Here are essential tips to stay safe outdoors:

- **Seek Shelter Immediately:** Find a sturdy building or a hard-topped vehicle as soon as possible. Avoid open fields and elevated areas.
- **Avoid Tall Objects:** Stay away from tall, isolated objects like trees, poles, and towers, which can attract lightning.
- **Stay Away from Water:** Do not swim, fish, or be near water bodies, as water is an excellent conductor of electricity.
- **Crouch Low to the Ground:** If no shelter is available, crouch down with as little of your body touching the ground as possible, minimizing contact points.
- **Disperse Group:** If you are in a group, spread out to reduce the chance of multiple injuries from a single strike.

Indoor Lightning Safety

Staying indoors is the safest option. However, you still should take precautions to minimize the risk of lightning-related incidents inside your home:

- **Avoid Water:** Do not use sinks, showers, or any plumbing, as lightning can travel through pipes.
- **Stay Away from Electrical Devices:** Unplug appliances and avoid using wired electronics to prevent electrical surges.
- **Stay Off Corded Phones:** Use a mobile phone instead to avoid the risk posed by lightning traveling through phone lines.
- **Avoid Windows and Doors:** Stay clear of windows and doors to avoid potential strikes or broken glass from nearby lightning strikes.
- **Avoid Touching Concrete Floors and Walls:** Lightning can travel through the metal wires or bars in concrete walls or flooring.

Understanding and implementing these safety measures can help Pennsylvanians reduce the risks associated with thunderstorms and lightning, ensuring both personal and community safety during such events.

Helping a Lightning Strike Victim

Lightning strike victims are safe to touch and do not carry an electrical charge, so render care immediately. Ensure you and the victim are both in a safe place, preferably indoors. Call 9-1-1. If trained, immediately begin CPR and use an AED if the person is unresponsive or not breathing. If using an AED, make sure you and the victim are not in a pool of water, as the charge from the AED shock can be carried through the water to the rescuer. To learn more, visit [here](#).

Enjoy A Safe & Fun Filled Summer

Summer is the season for backyard barbecues, pool parties and outdoor adventures. Remember these tips to help you enjoy a summer filled with fun while staying safe:



Grilling & Fire Pit Safety

- **Mind Your Space:** Position your grill or fire pit at least 10 feet away from your house, trees, and any other flammable structures or materials.
- **Keep an Eye Out:** Never leave a grill or fire pit unattended while it's lit, especially if there are children or pets nearby.
- **Extinguish Properly:** Before calling it a night, make sure to fully extinguish any fires. For charcoal grills, close the lid and shut off the vents. For fire pits, use water or sand to douse the flames completely.

Outdoor Electrical Tip

- **Check for Wear and Tear:** Regularly inspect outdoor electrical outlets, extension cords, and appliances for signs of damage or wear. Replace any frayed cords or damaged outlets promptly.
- **Stay Dry and Safe:** When using electrical devices outdoors, make sure they are rated for outdoor use and protected from moisture with weatherproof covers or enclosures.

Pool & Water Safety

- **Stay Vigilant:** Keep a close watch on children and inexperienced swimmers when they are near water, whether it's a pool, lake, or even a small backyard kiddie pool.
- **Install Barriers:** If you have a pool, install a sturdy fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate to prevent unsupervised access by children and pets.

Yard Upkeep

- **Clear the Clutter:** Regularly remove dry leaves, branches, and other debris from your yard to reduce the risk of fire hazards.
- **Prune with Care:** Trim back overhanging branches that could potentially come into contact with power lines or pose a fire risk to your home.

Be Prepared for Emergencies

- **Test Your Alarms:** Check your smoke alarms monthly to ensure they are functioning properly. Replace batteries as needed.
- **Plan Your Escape:** Develop a family emergency plan that includes a designated meeting place outside and practice it regularly. Keep fire extinguishers accessible and make sure everyone knows how to use them.

Hey Pet Parents! It's Pet Preparedness Month!

June is Pet Preparedness Month! It's the perfect time to make sure our furry, feathered, and scaly friends are ready for any emergency. We all know how much our pets mean to us, so let's take a few steps to keep them safe and sound no matter what happens.

Build a Pet Emergency Kit

Just like you have an emergency kit for yourself, your pets need one, too! Here's what to include:

- **Food and Water:** Pack at least a week's worth of food and water. Don't forget bowls and a manual can opener.
- **Medications and Medical Records:** Make sure you have a week's supply of any medications your pet needs, along with their medical records.
- **First Aid Kit:** Include basics like bandages, antiseptic wipes, and tweezers.
- **Comfort Items:** A few toys, blankets, and treats can help keep your pet calm.



- Sanitation Supplies: Bring litter and a litter box for cats and waste bags for dogs.

ID and Microchipping

Make sure your pets have up-to-date ID tags with your current contact info. Microchipping is also a great way to ensure you can be reunited with your pet if you get separated.

Plan for Evacuations

Know where to go if you need to evacuate and find pet-friendly hotels and shelters along your route. Keep carriers, leashes, and harnesses ready to grab. It's a good idea to practice loading your pets into carriers so it's less stressful if you need to do it quickly.

Get to Know Your Neighbor

Build a network with neighbors and friends who can help if you're not home during an emergency. Make sure they know your pets and have your contact info.

Emergency Contacts

Keep a list of emergency contacts handy. This should include your vet, local animal shelters, and pet-friendly hotels. Having this info ready can save a lot of time in a crisis.

Stay Updated

Sign up for local emergency alerts and updates. Knowing what's happening and what to do can make a huge difference when time is of the essence.

By taking these steps during Pet Preparedness Month, your pets are prepared and protected!

[JUNE TIP SHEET: LIGHTNING SAFETY - SAFE, SAFEST, NOT SAFE](#)

[JUNE SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT](#)

[If you received this newsletter as a forward, subscribe here.](#)



Learn more at pema.pa.gov and ready.pa.gov.
[PEMA on Facebook](#)
[PEMA on X](#)
[PEMA on LinkedIn](#)

