



## TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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### LIGHTNING: DANGEROUS AND DEADLY

AUSTIN – Lightning causes the second highest number of severe weather deaths in Texas, after flooding. Lightning is especially dangerous because it does not depend on extreme or severe storm conditions. It can occur during any storm, no matter how small, and can strike as far away as 15 to 20 miles from the storm itself.

Here are some important tips to protect yourself and your family.

Lightning tends to strike tall objects as well as metal objects, and can travel through moist soils for dozens of feet. Move into a sturdy building and stay away from windows and doors. For increased protection, avoid electric appliances or metal plumbing. Stay off the telephone.

If you are outside, the interior of a car, truck or bus is relatively safe from lightning. To be safe, do not touch metal on the inside of the vehicle. The outside bed of a truck is a deadly location. Do not lean against a car or truck -- get inside the vehicle quickly.

If you are outdoors with no shelter available, stay low. Move away from hills and high places, and avoid tall, isolated trees. Do not touch metal objects, such as tennis rackets, baseball bats or golf clubs. Do not ride bicycles, or lean against fences or metal sheds.

If you feel your hair suddenly stand on end, it means you may be a lightning target. Crouch low on the balls of your feet and try not to touch the ground with your knees or hands. Avoid wet areas that can conduct the lightning charge.

Lightning can strike as far away as ten miles from the area in which rain is falling. That's why you should follow the "30/30" lightning safety rule. If you cannot count to 30 between the time that lightning flashes and the time that you hear the rumble of thunder, it is not safe to remain outside. Remain indoors for 30 minutes after hearing the last sound of thunder.



For more information, contact TDEM Public Information at (512) 424-2138 or visit TDEM's Web site: [www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem).