

MYTH: Lightning victims carry an electrical charge and are not safe to touch. **FACT:** The human body does not store electricity and perfectly safe to touch. *This is the most chilling of lightning myths and victims need urgent medical attention. Dial 9-1-1 for help!*

MYTH: You are safe when there are no clouds and it isn't raining. **FACT:** Lightning usually strikes three miles away from the center of the thunderstorm, far outside the rain and clouds. Striking 10 to 15 miles away from a thunderstorm, lightning known as "bolts from the blue" is a recognized scientific occurrence.

MYTH: When caught outside during a thunderstorm, crouch down or lay flat on the ground to prevent being struck by lightning. **FACT:** Getting low to the ground does not make you safe, and laying flat increases your chance of being affected by ground current. If caught in a thunderstorm, keep moving toward a safe shelter.

MYTH: Lightning does not strike twice in the same place. **FACT:** Lightning usually strikes the same places! It often strikes tall, pointy and isolated objects. Mountains made of stone are often struck, and the Empire State Building is struck, on average, 100 times a year!

MYTH: You are safe if you are in a house during a thunderstorm. **FACT:** A house is a safer place, yet there are safety measures that need to be taken to be fully protected. Avoid anything that conducts electricity, such as corded phones, computers, and appliances. Older homes sometimes allow lightning to travel through existing cracks.

MYTH: A vehicle's rubber tires protect you from lightning. **FACT:** Most vehicles are safe from lightning, but it isn't because of the tires. The metal roof and sides protect you, while convertibles, motorcycles, bicycles, golf carts and cars with fiberglass shells offer no protection! When lightning strikes a vehicle, it goes through the metal frame into the ground. It is also unsafe to lean on doors during a thunderstorm.

MYTH: When playing a game outdoors, a thunderstorm does not pose an immediate threat, so you can finish your game. **FACT:** The majority of lightning deaths occur due to people not seeking shelter soon enough. Take shelter immediately after hearing thunder. No game is worth death or lifelong injury.

MYTH: Metal structures and metal on the body, such as jewelry, cell phones and watches, attract lightning. **FACT:** Don't waste time removing metal objects. Metal does not attract lightning, but it does conduct electricity, so stay away from metal fences, railings, bleachers, towers, etc.

MYTH: During a thunderstorm, seek shelter under a tree to stay out of the rain. **FACT:** Being under a tree is the second leading cause of lightning casualties. Getting wet does not present a threat as much as a tree does, so seek other shelter.

For more information, contact:

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First in Service

Lightning Safety



Provided by

The City of Myrtle Beach

Risk Reduction Tips

Lightning strikes more than 400 people each year in the United States, according to NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Lightning is one of the oldest observed phenomena, yet one of the least understood.

Did you know that lightning also can occur during forest fires, heavy blizzards, hurricanes and volcanic eruptions, not just thunderstorms?

Did you know...

If you hear thunder, you are in danger!

Many lightning deaths happen before and after storms pass through.

On average, lightning kills the same number of people yearly as hurricanes or tornadoes.

Lightning strikes leave many victims with permanent disabilities.

Many lightning casualties occur because victims did not seek shelter soon enough.

From 2009 through 2014, NOAA data shows that males accounted for 81 percent of all lightning deaths, with more than 90 percent of fatalities occurring in the fishing and sports categories.

Females had comparatively fewer deaths than men in every category, with highest percentages in boating-related activities (35 percent) and routine activities (36 percent.)

Educate, Plan, List and Act

- ⚡ Educate your family and community on the causes and dangers of lightning strikes.
- ⚡ Create a plan of action. Include the steps to take if lightning is spotted.
- ⚡ Generate a list of safe shelters in your area.
- ⚡ Distribute list to community members.
- ⚡ Fully enclosed buildings with wiring and plumbing provide the best protection.
- ⚡ Exclude unsafe shelters from the list, including sheds, picnic shelters, tents and covered porches.
- ⚡ Postpone or delay outdoor activities to avoid being caught in a lightning storm.
- ⚡ If you hear thunder, immediately move to a safe place.
- ⚡ Avoid open areas. Seek indoor shelter.
- ⚡ Keep away from all electrical equipment.
- ⚡ Stay away from water pipes, since they conduct electricity.
- ⚡ Do not take a bath or shower.
- ⚡ Stay away from isolated tall trees, towers and utility poles. Lightning strikes taller objects.

Fatalities (2009-14)	Related Activity
31	Fishing
17	Beach Enjoyment
16	Camping
14	Boating
14	Farming & Ranching
13	Yard Work
12	Soccer
8	Golf

Total Lightning Deaths, all causes... 287



Stay Informed!

An estimated 25 million cloud-to-ground lightning flashes occur annually in the U.S.

The National Weather Service issues severe thunderstorm warnings, but not lightning strike warnings.

Observing weather activity is a skill that can ensure your safety and the safety of others, possibly saving lives.

Keep a watchful eye and a listening ear toward the sky and be ready to act, if needed.

That's the best way to stay informed about the threat of lightning here in Myrtle Beach.

For more resources and information, visit:

www.cityofmyrtlebeach.com

[www.facebook.com/
myrtlebeachcitygovernment](https://www.facebook.com/myrtlebeachcitygovernment)