

THUNDERSTORMS

Thunderstorms are very common in Ohio. They can happen at any time of the year, but are most common during the spring, summer and late summer.

- Most thunderstorms happen in the late afternoon during the summer months.
- A thunderstorm “watch” means conditions are right for thunderstorm to develop. A thunderstorm “warning” means a thunderstorm has developed and is approaching.
- Thunderstorms can produce a number of dangerous weather-related phenomenon, including:
 - Lightning - This is the second leading weather-related cause of death in the United States.
 - Tornadoes - These can approach quickly and can cause damage and death.
 - High Wind - Wind can down trees and damage homes.
 - Heavy rain and flooding - Flooding is the leading weather-related cause of death in the United States.
- It is important to pay attention to the weather and to weather warnings issued on television and the radio. Advanced warning is critical to your safety during thunderstorms and thunderstorm-related weather events.

Also available in the personal and family preparedness series is:

Booklet:

A Guide to Preparedness

Pamphlet:

A Personal and Family Preparedness Plan

Brochures:

Preparing for a Winter Storm

Preparing for a Fire

Preparing for a Flood

Preparing for a Thunderstorm, Lightning or Tornado

First Aid Kits

Supplies: A Guide to Having What You May Need

Before and After a Disaster: Things to Think About

Bird Flu: What You Should Know

This brochure is a publication of the
Ross County Health District's
COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS
Program staff

475 Western Ave., Suite 5A
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601
740-779-1039

www.rosscountyhealth.com

Preparing for a THUNDERSTORM LIGHTNING OR TORNADO



Courtesy of the



LIGHTNING

On average, lightning strikes kill more than 70 people each year in the US, and injures more than 300. It's important to be aware of weather conditions and act appropriately and responsibly.

- If you can hear thunder, you can be struck by lightning.
- Lightning has been known to strike more than 10 miles away from the storm.
- Inside your home is the safest place to be: stay away from windows and doors; do not try to take a shower or a bath.
- You can unplug air conditioners, computers and televisions to reduce the likelihood of them being damaged by lightning. Do not use the telephone if lightning is happening.
- If you are in your car during a lightning storm, stay there. Do not touch the car's steel frame and keep the windows rolled up. It's a common misconception that the rubber tires keep cars from being struck, when it's actually the steel frame that absorbs a lightning strike.
- If you are outside, seek shelter indoors.
- If you cannot get indoors, try to make yourself shorter than surrounding objects. If you are in the woods and unable to get out, try to stay under the shortest trees. If you are on the water, get to land. If you are out in an open field, try to keep a low profile. Lie down in a low spot or depression, but be alert for possible flooding.
- Even after a storm passes, lightning can be a danger. Remain indoors for 30 minutes.

PREPARING FOR A TORNADO

Tornadoes strike quickly and often without warning. But having a plan and knowing what you need to do and where you need to seek shelter can increase your chance of survival.

- If a storm is approaching, pay attention to weather advisories and to the conditions around you. A dark sky, low, dark clouds, large hail and a loud roaring sound can be signs of an approaching tornado.
- A tornado "watch" means weather conditions are favorable for the formation of a tornado. A tornado "warning" means a tornado has been spotted and you should get to shelter.
- Know what the various tones of your community's emergency siren are indicating.
- Have a plan in place and make sure the entire family knows it. Practice the plan, especially with your children.
- Know where the shut-off switches are for your electricity and gas source.
- Have a first aid kit at or near the area where you will take cover during a tornado. It may be a good idea to be trained in first aid.
- Keep heavy objects away from the area where you will take cover during a tornado. Heavy objects can fall, causing injury.
- If you live in a mobile home, it would be a good idea to identify another place to shelter from a tornado. Mobile homes are unsafe and can be easily destroyed by a tornado. Select a building nearby, or a low-lying area outside of the mobile home.

TORNADO SAFETY

There are many things you can do to reduce the risk of injury or even death during a tornado.

- Pay attention to the weather and weather advisories and if a tornado warning is issued, seek shelter immediately.
- You should take shelter in a basement or cellar.
- If you don't have a basement, use a room that is in the interior of your home. The room should not have windows. Be aware of falling or flying objects. Lay down in the bathtub or get under a desk or table.
- If you are in a car, get out and seek shelter in a building or, if that's not possible, a ditch or culvert. Avoid cars and open fields. Be aware of flying debris or falling trees.
- In a large building such as a mall, theater or gym, stay away from windows. Try to find something sturdy to get under. If nothing else, get in a door frame.
- In all cases, use your hands and arms to protect your head from falling objects or flying debris.
- After a tornado passes there are some things you need to consider:
 - Is your home structurally safe?
 - Do you need to shut off your electricity or gas?
 - Is there debris that you could step on or something that could fall on you?
 - Can you assist your neighbors?
 - Are there downed power lines?