

News & Notes

FACTS ABOUT THUNDERSTORMS AND LIGHTNING

- They frequently occur in lines, clusters, or individually.
- Some of the worst storms occur when an individual storm affects one area for long periods of time.
- Thunderstorms usually create brief heavy rain, typically between a half hour to a hour.
- Thunderstorms frequently develop in humid and warm temperatures.
- Nearly 10 percent of thunderstorms are considered severe – a storm producing large chunks of hail and winds exceeding 50 miles per hour
- Unpredictable lightning poses major risks to property and people.
- Lightning strikes frequently occur 10 miles from rainfall.
- “Heat lightning” is a phenomenon occurring when lightning remains silent since it’s far away from thunder. Remain cautious since the storm could be moving towards you.
- Lightning deaths and injuries typically occur when individuals get caught outside during evening and afternoon summer storms.
- The odds of getting struck by lightning are 1 in 600,000 but this number is dramatically increased by adhering to safety procedures.
- Electrical charge does not remain in the body after lightning strikes. Persons struck by lightning should seek medical attention immediately.



“Are they real or is this a screen saver?”

Riddles of the Month

- 1) What do you call a group of cattle with a sense of humor?
- 2) What do you get from a pampered cow?
- 3) What do tigers have that no other animal has?
- 4) I have four wings but cannot fly. I never laugh and never cry. On the same spot always found, toiling away with little sound. What am I?

Answers on Page 2 Safety Bits & Pieces



National Safe at Home Week: 8/23 to 8/29

Safety Matters



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Thunderstorm & Lightning Safety

Thunderstorms pose major threats to human health and property. Lightning is a byproduct of thunderstorms. Although few people are killed by lightning, it is still one of the leading causes of storm-related deaths in America. Thunderstorms often contribute to flash flooding, dangerous hail, heavy winds, and tornadoes. Flash flooding contributes to most thunder-related deaths, over 140 each year.

What to Do Before Thunderstorms and Lightning

Take the following steps to be prepared for thunderstorms:

- Develop a family communications plan and gather an emergency preparedness kit.
- Remove rotting trees or dead branches; these pose fall and other safety hazards during a thunderstorm.
- Delay any outdoor plans.
- Adhere to the 30/30 Lightning Safety Rule: stay indoors if lightning is visible and strikes multiple times in less than 30 seconds prior to any thunder. Remain inside for a half hour after hearing any thunder.
- Place outdoor objects that could create damage or blow away in a garage or shed.
- Go inside a building or covered vehicle. It’s possible to be injured by lightning while sitting in a car, but these injuries are less severe than those sustained outside.
- Rubber tires and rubber shoes do not provide protection during a lightning storm, but you can be protected while sitting in a covered car.
- Place shutters on windows and close outside doors. If you do not own shutters, close all curtains, shades, or blinds.
- Unplug electronic devices prior to the storm.

What to do During Thunderstorms and Lightning

Follow these precautions if lightning or thunderstorms hit your region:

- Listen to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather radio broadcasts for local updates.
- Only use corded phones for medical emergencies. If possible, use a cell or cordless phone.
- Do not touch electrical cords or devices. Unplug electronic devices and large appliances, including air conditioners and TVs. Electrical devices are often damaged by power surges caused by lightning.
- Avoid using plumbing equipment. Refrain from taking a shower, washing hands and dishes, and washing clothes. Plumbing fixtures and other plumbing equipment conducts electricity.
- Do not sit on the porch and stay clear of doors and windows.
- Refrain from laying on concrete floors or leaning on concrete walls.
- Avoid natural objects that attract lightning, such as tree branches in open areas.
- Stay off the beach, water, open fields, and hilltops.
- Wait the storm out in a sturdy building. Stay out of small buildings or sheds in open areas.
- Do not touch anything containing metal, such as bikes, golf clubs and carts, tools, tractors, and lawnmowers.
- If driving, safely exit the highway or pull over. Use emergency flashers and wait the storm out until rainfall ceases. Do not touch metal or other objects in your vehicle that conduct electricity.

Lightning Safety When Outdoors

- If you’re in a forest seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees.
- If you’re in an open area go to a low place such as a ravine or valley. Be alert for flash floods.
- If you’re in open water get to land and find shelter immediately.
- If you feel your hair stand on end (which indicates that lightning is about to strike) squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands over your ears and your head between your knees. Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact with the ground. DO NOT lie flat on the ground.

Safety Bits & Pieces

WHAT TO DO AFTER A THUNDERSTORM OR LIGHTNING STRIKE

Call 911 immediately if struck by lightning. Check the following vital signs while administering CPR to a person struck by lightning:

-**Breathing** - if breathing has ceased, administer mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

-**Heartbeat** - if a heartbeat is not detected, administer CPR.

-**Pulse** - When victims are breathing and a heartbeat is present, check them for other injuries, including burns since lightning can cause severe burns, vision and hearing problems, and damage to the nervous system.

After the storm passes remember to:

-Avoid flooded roads. Turn around immediately since it's impossible to know the water depth.

-Steer clear of storm-damaged regions since remaining in these areas increases injury risks.

-Remain updated about weather changes and road closures by listening to NOAA Weather Radio or local TV and radio broadcasts.

-Assist people with special needs, including the elderly, infants, and the disabled.

-Avoid damaged power lines and report any downed line sightings ASAP.

-Keep a close eye on pets and maintain direct control over them.

RIDDLES OF THE MONTH ANSWERS

- 1) A laughing stock
- 2) Spoiled Milk
- 3) Baby Tigers
- 4) Windmill

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE



"I'll have you know that this is going in my blog."

SAFETY TIPS OF THE MONTH

August is designated as Back-to-School Safety Month, so follow the tips below to keep children safe:

- 1) Slow down and be especially alert in residential neighborhoods and school zones
- 2) Take extra time to look for children at intersections, on medians and on curbs
- 3) Enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly and carefully
- 4) Watch for children on and near the road in the morning and after school hours
- 5) Reduce any distractions inside your car so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings.

WATCH vs. WARNING: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

With the severe weather season underway, now is a good time to go over the difference between tornado and severe thunderstorm watches and warnings. A **WATCH** means that the potential exists for the development of severe thunderstorms or tornadoes, depending upon the specific type of watch issued. In the case of a tornado watch, this DOES NOT mean that a tornado has been seen or even indicated on radar...it just means that conditions are favorable for the formation of tornadoes in thunderstorms. Similarly, a severe thunderstorm watch means that conditions are just conducive for the development of severe weather, and DOES NOT indicate that severe weather has been reported. While no immediate action on the part of the general public is required for the issuance of a watch, citizens should keep up to date on the current weather situation and be prepared to seek shelter if necessary.

A **WARNING**, on the other hand, requires more immediate action and should be taken seriously. A severe thunderstorm warning indicates that severe weather is imminent in your area or is already occurring (based on either human observation or doppler radar). The term severe refers to hail greater than or equal to 1.00" in diameter and/or wind gusts that meet or exceed 58 mph. Although these storms can also be associated with dangerous cloud to ground lightning or heavy rainfall that is capable of causing flash flooding, neither of these two items serve as criteria for a severe thunderstorm warning being issued.

A tornado warning can be thought of as a very specific severe thunderstorm warning, and means that a tornado has been either spotted by a human observer or indicated by Doppler radar. Similar to a severe thunderstorm warning, once a tornado warning is issued for your area, you should take cover immediately...as the likelihood of you being directly impacted by a tornado is at a heightened risk.



QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

"We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark; the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light."

Plato, Greek philosopher



From the State of Delaware's Office of Highway Safety... IMPAIRED DRIVING

Impaired driving remains a public safety threat that still claims thousands of innocent lives on our roadways every year. In Delaware this year, there have been 15 fatalities attributed to impaired driving and 1,826 DUI arrests as of 6/15/2016. Here is additional information specifically related to Delaware:

In 2015, 31% of DUI related **crashes** occurred between 9 PM and 2 AM.

- Sussex County crashes are much flatter and tend to extend from 6 PM through 2 AM.

- New Castle County is even more extreme in the 9 PM – 2 AM time period (38%).

Drivers aged between **20 and 44 are most likely to be involved in a DUI related crash**, although over the last two years, younger driver involvement has dropped significantly and it has trended towards more older drivers.

- 76% of drivers in crashes were male and 24% were female.

- 4% of crashes have involved a driver aged 19 and under since 2011.

DUI **arrests** were up in 2015 (2014 – 3,917 vs. 2015 – 4,175)

65% of arrests occurred between 9 PM and 4 AM. 62% of arrests occurred on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The largest periods are between: Friday 9 PM – Saturday 4 AM; Saturday 11 PM – Sunday 5 AM.

Arrests were relatively low until July, peaking in August, and then remaining at a higher rate through December.

Remember, with all of today's alternatives to getting home safely, there's no excuse for getting behind the wheel after drinking alcohol. Driving impaired is never worth the risk, not to yourself or anyone else. If law enforcement pulls you over for drunk driving, you can count on being arrested.