

**LIGHTNING AWARENESS & SAFETY
IN SOUTH CAROLINA
A PUBLIC SERVICE EBOOK BY MEL COKER**



Lightning Kills Play It Safe

**When outside...
if you see signs
of a developing
storm, head to
a safe place
immediately!**

www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov



NOAA PA 200666

LIGHTNING KILLS... AN OVERVIEW

Each year in the United States, more than 400 people are struck by lightning. On average, 62 people are killed and hundreds of others suffer permanent neurological disabilities. Most of these tragedies can be avoided with a few simple precautions. Only about 10% of people who are struck by lightning are killed, leaving 90% with various degrees of disability. Many people are injured each year by lightning and most have serious injuries.

When thunderstorms threaten, get to a safe place. Lightning safety is an inconvenience that can save your life.

All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous. In the United States, in an average year, lightning kills about the same number of people as tornadoes and more people than hurricanes.

Lightning often strikes outside the area of heavy rain and may strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall. Many lightning deaths occur ahead of storms or after storms have seemingly passed.

If you can hear thunder, you are in danger. Don't be fooled by blue skies. If you hear thunder, lightning is close enough to pose an immediate threat.

Lightning is a serious danger. Of the victims who were killed by lightning in 2007 (in the United States):


- 98% were outside
- 89% were male
- 30% were males between the ages of 20-25
- 25% were standing under a tree
- 25% occurred on or near the water


How Powerful is Lightning? Each spark of lightning can reach over five miles in length, soar to temperatures of approximately 50,000 degrees Fahrenheit, and contain 100 million electrical volts (and much higher). If you see lightning and hear thunder at the same time, that lightning is in your neighborhood!

WHEN THUNDER ROARS, GO INDOORS!

LIGHTNING KILLS
PLAY IT SAFE

"When you hear thunder, head for the clubhouse... Let the storm play through."

 **Rocco Mediate**
Four-Time PGA TOUR Champion



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NOAA PA 320154

The poster features a collage of outdoor activities: a person fishing, a person on a bicycle, a person on a horse, and a person on a boat. A large lightning bolt strikes the water in the foreground. On the right, a golfer in a dark shirt and white cap is shown in a ready stance. The background is a dark, stormy sky with lightning bolts.

South Carolina has a wide range of outdoor recreation opportunities. Many may be very dangerous during thunderstorms. Golf course, high places in the mountains and our beautiful lakes are all potential dangerous places during these storms. Take appropriate precautions and *play it safe!*

LIGHTNING STATISTICS WHERE SOUTH CAROLINA RANKS

Lightning Deaths by State from 1998 to 2007 – Top 5

- 1.) Florida
- 2.) Texas
- 3.) Colorado
- 4.) Georgia
- 5.) North Carolina

South Carolina is # 9

Lightning Deaths by State PER CAPITA from 1998 to 2007 – Top 5

- 1.) Wyoming
- 2.) Montana
- 3.) Colorado
- 4.) Utah
- 5.) Florida

South Carolina is # 9

Lightning Strikes by State from 1996 to 2005

- 1.) Florida
- 2.) Louisiana
- 3.) Mississippi
- 4.) Alabama
- 5.) **South Carolina**

South Carolina is definitely in the grouping of states with highest risk of lightning strikes and fatalities. PLEASE be careful during storms!



LIGHTNING SAFETY TIPS

Avoid dangerous locations/activities:

- Open areas
- High or elevated places
- Near tall isolated objects
- Water related activities (swimming, boating, fishing, near water)
- DO NOT go under trees
- Near electrical/electronics equipment

Safest places to be during lightning: No place is absolutely safe from lightning! However, some places are much safer than others...

- Home
- Permanent building
- Automobile

IF you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance!

WHEN THUNDER ROARS, GO INDOORS!

[The 30/30 Rule](#) states that people should seek shelter if the "Flash-To-Bang" delay (length of time in seconds from the sight of the lightning flash to the arrival of its subsequent thunder), is 30 seconds or less, and that they remain under cover until 30 minutes after the final clap of thunder. Example: If it takes 10 seconds between the time you see a lightning flash and hear the rumble of thunder, then the lightning flash is 2 miles from your location (too close!!)

Keep an "eye on the sky" if clouds begin to build and darken. Use a weather radio while enjoying outdoor activities.

More information: [Lightning – The Underrated Killer](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

- The odds (app.) of becoming a lightning victim in the U.S. in any one year is 1 in 700,000.
- The odds (app) of being struck in your lifetime is 1 in 3,000.

LIGHTNING SAFETY & AWARENESS RESOURCES

Columbia, SC Weather: [National Weather Service](#) | [AccuWeather](#)
[Lake Murray Weather Station](#) | [Lake Murray Weather – Weather Underground](#)
[Weather Channel Severe Weather](#) | [AccuWeather Severe Weather](#)

[StrikeStar – U.S. Lightning Activity Last 30 Minutes](#)
[Lightning Strike Densities by State](#)

[Lightning Safety – NOAA / National Weather Service](#)
[Lightning Safety for You and Your Family](#)
[Lightning Safety – More Information – National Weather Service](#)
[StruckByLightning.org](#)
[National Lightning Safety Institute](#)

[National Geographic – Lightning information, videos, photos](#)

[Michael Bath's Lightning Photography Website](#)



lightningphotography.com

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PLAY IT SAFE AROUND LIGHTNING!

THANKS FOR VIEWING MY LIGHTNING SAFETY EBOOK!



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www.MelCoker.com