

news & notes

BEAT THE ODDS

The odds of an average person being a lightning casualty over your lifetime are about 3,000 to 1. Those are pretty good odds. But you can make them even better by following the 30-30 rule.

Here's how:

1. **Watch for dark skies**, threatening clouds, or increasing winds, even if it is not raining.
2. **When you see lightning, count the seconds** until you hear thunder.
3. **If that time is 30 seconds or less, the thunderstorm is within 6 miles** of where you are and is dangerous. You are close enough to be struck.
4. **Seek shelter immediately.**
5. **Wait at least 30 minutes** after the last clap of thunder before leaving shelter.
6. **Don't be fooled** by sunshine or blue sky!

Furthermore, be smart by being prepared when you participate in outdoor summer activities:

- Listen to weather forecasts—have a radio with you—and plan ahead for possible shelter in case of a thunderstorm.
- Know that lightning is most likely to occur in hot, humid, summer weather, during the late afternoon or early evening.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

June 2010

Summer Safety

National Safety Month, Week 5

Here are this year's National Safety Month themes:

- Week 1 (6/1 to 6/6): Prescription Drug Overdose Prevention
- Week 2 (6/7 to 6/13): Teen Driving Safety
- Week 3 (6/14 to 6/20): Preventing Overexertion at Work & at Home
- Week 4 (6/21 to 6/27): Dangers of Cell Phone Use While Driving
- Week 5 (6/28 to 6/30): Summer Safety**

Visit www.nsc.org for more on these themes. Since Week 5 only gets two days, let's focus on Summer Safety now. One hazard of summer weather is lightning, which has been the #2 weather killer in the United States over the past 30 years. In fact lightning kills more people than hurricanes and tornadoes combined.

Understand that no place OUTSIDE is safe during a thunderstorm. Being caught outside with no safe shelter is a severe emergency. Follow these suggestions, which won't protect you but may improve your odds:

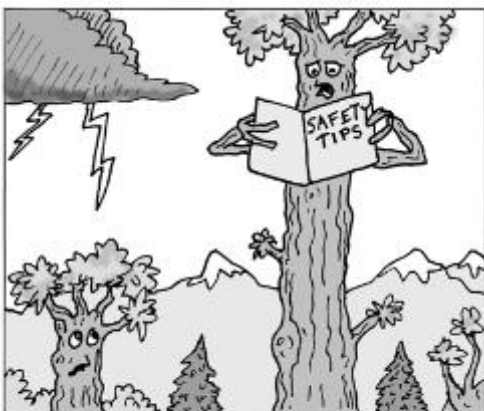
- Do not seek shelter under tall, isolated trees.
- Do not seek shelter under partially enclosed buildings or in tents.
- Stay away from metal objects, such as fences, poles, or golf clubs.
- Stay away from water.
- Find the lowest spot around and crouch down.

The SAFEST location is a fully enclosed building with wiring and plumbing. Such buildings are safe because of their wiring and plumbing. Unsafe buildings include picnic or beach shelters, large outdoor tents, or other buildings that do not have electricity or plumbing.

The second safest location is a hard-topped car, SUV, bus, or other hard-topped vehicle. Do not seek shelter in a soft-topped convertible. Close all the windows and doors and do not touch any metal surfaces.

If someone is struck by lightning, call 911 or your local emergency number to get immediate medical care. You are in no danger of an electrical charge if you touch a lightning victim or administer CPR.

Check out the sidebar for tips on how to be prepared and to "Beat the Odds" of a lightning strike. Stay safe in summer storms.



"It says: In a lightning storm, don't seek shelter under a tall... Oh crud!"



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GOT A PLAN?

Lifting begins with planning. Before moving any object, examine the load to ensure:

- **The weight is stable** and won't shift.
- **There are no rough spots** or sharp edges—if there are, wear a pair of thick gloves.
- **You can handle it alone**—if you cannot, get help.
- **You'll be able to see over the load** while carrying—if not, use material handling equipment or make a couple of trips.

Also, plan the route you'll take.

- **Map out the easiest route**, not necessarily the shortest.
- **Move objects along the route** to avoid bumping into or tripping over them.
- **Look for safe places to stop and rest**, if necessary.
- **Ensure the object can be unloaded easily** and safely at the other end.

Once you have a plan, you're ready to proceed. The secret to safe lifting is to:

- **Assume the safe lifting position.** Stand close to the object and keep a wide stance. Keep your feet turned out and your heels down. Squat by bending at the hips and knees. Your ears, shoulders, and hips should form a nearly straight line.
- **Prepare to lift.** Pull the load close to your body and grasp the object firmly. Tighten your stomach muscles.
- **Let the legs do the lifting.** Maintain the natural curves of your spine and rise up from the squatting position using your legs to power the lift. Do not bend over at the neck, shoulders, or waist as you lift.



Teen Driving Safety

National Safety Month, Week 2

While teen workers are eager to get their first jobs, for safety's sake, they are limited in what they're allowed to do, including how much they can drive. Only workers 17 or older may drive on public roads as part of their jobs. And they can only do such driving during daylight hours.

In addition, they must be in vehicles that weigh no more than 6,000 pounds and are equipped with seat belts that teens are required to wear while driving. Teens who drive as part of their jobs must also have a valid license for that type of driving and have successfully completed state-approved driver education. They must have no record of moving violations when hired.

No more than a third of any workday or 20 percent of their workweek can be spent driving, and they may make no more than two daily trips from their primary worksite either to deliver employer goods to a customer or to transport passengers, aside from co-workers. Teen also can't hold jobs where driving involves:

- Towing vehicles, urgent or time-sensitive deliveries, or route deliveries or sales
- Transporting property, goods, or passengers for hire
- Transporting more than three passengers, including other employees
- Driving outside a 30-mile radius from the workplace on somebody else's lap, for example, or ride in the bed of a truck.

Prescription Drugs

National Safety Month, Week 1

According to the National Institute on Drugs (NID) *Prescription Drugs Abuse and Addiction* report (<http://www.nida.nih.gov/PDF/RRPrescription.pdf>), the most commonly abused prescription drugs are:

1. Opioids, used mostly to manage pain
2. Central nervous system depressants, used for anxiety and sleep disorders
3. Stimulants, used for sleep disorders and ADHD

Certain over-the-counter (OTC) medications can also have dangerous side effects and be abused. Make sure you know the possible addictive or abusive dangers in OTC meds such as:

- Cough suppressants
- Sleep aids
- Antihistamines

The NID report recommends these tips to avoid becoming addicted:

- Tell your healthcare provider all the prescriptions, OTC medicines, and dietary and herbal supplements you are taking.
- Give your healthcare provider a full description of your condition before you obtain any other medications.
- Follow the prescribed directions.
- Know the potential interactions with other drugs.
- Don't stop or change a dosing regimen without checking with your doctor.
- Don't use another person's prescription.