

### **Severe Thunderstorm Watch**

A severe thunderstorm watch is issued by the National Weather Service when the weather conditions are such that a severe storm (damaging winds 58 miles per hour or more, or hail  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch in diameter or greater) is likely to develop. During this time, locate a safe place in the home and tell family members to watch the sky and listen to the radio and television for more information.

### **Severe Thunderstorm Warning**

A severe thunderstorm warning is issued when a severe thunderstorm has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. At this point, the danger is very serious and everyone should go to a safe place, turn on a battery-operated radio or television and wait for an "all clear" from authorities.

### **Before a Thunderstorm**

Learn the thunderstorm danger signs: dark towering or threatening clouds with distant lightning and thunder. Check for hazards in the yard: dead or rotting trees and branches can fall during a severe storm and cause injury or damage. Have the recommended emergency supplies on hand. Know the difference between a "severe thunderstorm watch" and a "severe thunderstorm warning". Follow the advisories issued by forecasters, which describe the location, strength and

movement of the thunderstorm. Make sure all family members know how to respond to a tornado and a flash flood. Tornadoes are spawned by thunderstorms and flash flooding can occur due to heavy rains.

### **During a Thunderstorm....**

#### **If indoors**

Secure outdoor objects such as lawn furniture that could blow away, causing damage or injury. Take light objects inside. If possible, shutter windows securely and brace outside doors. Listen constantly to the radio or television for official instructions. Make sure you have a battery-operated radio in case power fails. Do not handle any electrical equipment or telephone because lightning could follow the wire. Television sets are particularly dangerous at this time. Avoid bathtubs, water faucets and sinks because metal pipes can transmit electricity.

#### **If outdoors**

Attempt to get into a building or car. If no structure is available, get to an open space, preferably low to the ground, as quickly as possible. (If in the woods, find an area protected by a group of trees- never stand under a single tree in the open.) Avoid tall structures such as towers, tall

trees, fences, telephone lines or power lines. Stay away from natural lightning rods such as golf clubs, tractors, fishing rods, and bicycles or camping equipment. Kneel or crouch with hands on knees. Stay away from rivers, lakes or other bodies of water. If someone is struck by lightning, check for breathing and a pulse. If there is none, call 9-1-1 first then start CPR. A person who has been struck by lightning does not carry an electrical charge that can shock other people. If the victim is breathing and has a pulse, check for other injuries. If the victim is burned, provide first aid and call 911 immediately. Look for burns where lightning entered and exited the body.

### **If in your car**

Pull onto the shoulder of the road away from any trees that could fall on the vehicle. Stay in the car and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rains subside.

### **If in a boat**

Put on a life jacket, reduce speed, and proceed with caution. Stay low in the boat. Point the bow of the boat into the wind and waves. Head to the nearest safe location. Place fishing rods flat on deck.

### **After the Thunderstorm**

Report downed power lines; do not touch any wire. Drive only if necessary. Debris and

washed-out roads may make driving dangerous.