

## HOW TO AVOID BECOMING A LIGHTNING CASUALTY

*"Be proactive"*



### DAYS BEFORE THE ACTIVITY

Become aware of expected weather by listening to the extended weather forecasts. Decide on the criteria you will use to stop your outdoor activities and where and when to take shelter.

### DAY OF THE ACTIVITY

Have a plan during outdoor activities for where and when to take shelter if lightning moves into the area. Designate a group "lightning spotter" to warn the group when lightning threatens.

### WHEN THUNDERSTORMS THREATEN

Estimate distance to the lightning using the flash-to-bang method. Count the seconds between the flash of the lightning and the bang of the thunder. Divide the number of seconds by five. The answer is approximately the number of miles from you to the storm. Determine whether the storm is approaching your position or moving away. If the storm is less than six miles away (30 seconds) you may be in danger - take shelter now! Take action so you have ample time to reach shelter.

### LIGHTNING NEARBY

Take shelter. Go inside a building or vehicle -- do not touch anything metal or anything that is connected to power, phone, plumbing, television or computers. Shelter in a stand of trees of even height. Stand away from the trunks. Do not shelter below isolated trees. Move off the peaks and out of exposed areas. Get out of water and move away from shorelines. If with a group, spread out. Drop fishing rods, rifles and remove metal objects that are in contact with your body.

**"Don't be, or don't be connected to the highest object in the area."**

### LAST MINUTE

If you have ignored these precautions and are caught out, crouch down on the balls of your feet with your head down, arms wrapped around your knees with your hands over your ears. If you cannot assume or hold this position stand in the safest area available with your feet together. Stay protected until the storm leaves your area -- many casualties occur because people do not take shelter soon enough or leave their shelter too soon. Wait at least 30 minutes after the last lightning discharge in your area before leaving the safety of your shelter.

"It is far safer not to get caught out in a thunderstorm than to try to protect yourself once the storm has started!"