

Lightning

Lightning Kills, Play It Safe

Lightning is a serious danger. A bolt of lightning reaches a temperature approaching 50,000 degrees fahrenheit in a split second. The rapid heating and cooling of air near the lightning causes thunder.

HOW CAN YOU TELL HOW FAR AWAY A STORM IS?

You can tell how far away lightning struck by counting seconds between the flash and the thunder. Every 5 seconds equals one mile, so if you count 10 seconds until you hear the thunder, the lightning flash was 2 miles away.

In the United States, an average of 67 people are killed each year by lightning. In 2003, there were 44 deaths. That's more than the annual number of people killed by tornadoes or hurricanes. Many more are struck but survive. However, they often report a variety of long-term, debilitating symptoms, including memory loss, attention deficits, sleep disorders, numbness, dizziness, stiffness in joints, irritability, fatigue, weakness, muscle spasms, depression, and an inability to sit for long periods of time.

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