

“For Safety’s Sake - Do Something”

Lightning Strikes Cause Devastating Results

There are several ways a person can get struck by lightning.

Direct Strike - This often occurs when a person is out in open areas. Being struck directly by lightning is not a common occurrence and usually results in death.

Side Flash - Lightning will strike an object and then jump from the object to the victim. This occurs when a person is standing within a few feet of the struck object.

Ground Current - Energy from a lightning strike will disperse from the struck object along the ground. Anyone outside near a lightning strike is a potential victim of ground current. This type of lightning strike causes the most injuries and fatalities for people and animals.

Conduction - Lightning can travel through wires or metal surfaces. A person is at high risk of being struck outdoors if they are holding or touching an object that conducts electricity, such as a golf club, fishing pole, scaffolding, or power tools. Even indoors, a person can be a lightning victim if they are touching an object that conducts electricity, such as a landline telephone or plumbing (water faucets or showers).

For more information about lightning please visit:
<http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/struck.shtml>



Victim's golf bag destroyed by lightning strike



A strike of lightning left Winston Kemp, a 24-year-old electrician, with Lichtenberg figures, a skin discoloration. Photo from GearDiary.com

The effects of a lightning strike can be devastating.

In Wisconsin in 2007, a 75-year-old man was killed by a lightning strike while waiting out a storm under a pine tree during a morning golf game. The lightning struck his golf bag while he was holding on to one of his clubs, killing him instantly. As you can see in the photo, the golf bag is unrecognizable.

Last month in Norway, 323 wild reindeer were killed by lightning during a storm. It is unclear if it was one lightning strike, or multiple strikes, but it happened all in one moment.

So far this year, 35 people have died in the United States from lightning strikes, which is unusually high compared to previous years.

In 2011, 24-year-old Winston Kemp was struck by lightning while bringing in pumpkins out of a storm, leaving him with a [Lichtenberg figure](#) along his arm. Lightning strike survivors may be lucky to escape death, but most experience long-term ailments. Common after-effects of a lightning strike include pain, headaches, seizures, depression, memory loss, respiratory distress, loss of senses, and brain damage.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- NO PLACE is safe outside when thunderstorms are in the area!
- If you hear thunder, immediately move to safe shelter.
- Stay in the shelter at least 30 minutes after you hear the last sound of thunder.
- Stay away from windows, doors, and porches.
- Stay off corded phones, computers, or other electrical equipment that put you in direct contact with electricity.
- Avoid indoor plumbing, including sinks, baths, and faucets.
- Do not lie on concrete floors, and do not lean against concrete walls.