

Spring Is Storm Season

Severe spring and summer storms bring tornadoes, flooding and lightning to many states across the country. Michael Brownley, head of our Traffic and Off-Duty Safety Division, wants you to be prepared in the event of a storm, and especially the lightning that often accompanies it. He offers some important safety tips to consider:

- Keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of light, or increasing wind. Listen for the sound of thunder. If you hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio, The Weather Channel or local television news for the latest forecast.

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- Find shelter on the lowest floor of a sturdy building when a storm approaches. If you cannot get inside a shelter, squat low near the ground in an open area. Lying flat on the ground is not recommended, because it puts more of your body into contact with the ground, which is an excellent conductor of electricity from lightning.

- Turn off air conditioning. Power surges from lightning can overload the compressor, resulting in a costly repair job.

- Draw blinds and shades over windows. If windows break because of objects blown by the wind, the shades may prevent glass from shattering into your home.

- If you are in a mobile home or car during severe weather and conditions are right for a tornado, get out and find sturdy shelter elsewhere.

- People struck by lightning carry no electrical charge and can be handled safely. If someone is struck, call 911 or your local emergency services number. The injured person has received an electrical shock and may be burned. If the victim stops breathing, begin rescue breathing. If the heart has stopped beating, give CPR.

Severe storms can happen quickly and sometimes without warning. We urge you to have a plan of action for severe storms now, while you have time to prepare. If you have never taken a CPR course, do so now. Have a supply of bottled water and dried or canned goods on hand in case of a power outage. Make sure you have a fresh supply of flashlight batteries

For more information on preparing for severe storms, tornadoes and other disasters, or to find out about CPR class schedules, contact your local American Red Cross chapter. [A](#)