



Franklin County Emergency Management Agency

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Media Release

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Franklin County Emergency Management Agency Offers Tips for Lightning Safety Awareness Week.

Lightning safety awareness week is June 22nd through June 28th, 2008.

(Franklin County, Illinois) The Franklin County Emergency Management Agency will observe lightning safety awareness week next week. Lightning safety awareness week will be observed statewide from June 22nd through 28th, 2008. On average 61 people are killed by lightning strikes in the U.S. each year and more than 1,000 people are injured.

Approximately 67% of fatalities and injuries from lightning occur outdoors during recreational activities such as baseball games, soccer games, golfing and boating. If there are storms in the weather forecast, you should plan ahead and consider postponing events. Coaches, umpires, or referees should have guidelines for postponing events before storms approach. "A portable all-hazards weather alert radio is also a tool that can be utilized if you are at an outdoor event. You should designate one person in your group to monitor the radio for inclement weather," said Public Information Officer Kathie Flowers. A substantial building indoors is your best shelter. Carports, porches, garages, sheds, tents and dugouts are not substantial shelters and should be avoided.

Even though the majority of injuries and fatalities occur outdoors, lightning can enter buildings and you can be injured while you are indoors. While indoors you should avoid contact with corded phones, stay away from windows and exterior doors, avoid contact with electrical equipment or cords, and stay away from plumbing and plumbing appliances. Most victims of lightning strikes can survive with proper treatment. Immediate medical attention may be the difference between life and death. "One myth with lightning strike victims is that they carry an electrical charge. This is not true. They are safe to be handled and cannot injure anyone that provides medical attention," added Flowers. Lightning causes cardiac arrest in most fatalities. You should check to see if the victim has a pulse and is breathing, if not you should call 911 and begin CPR.

If you would like additional information including a free lightning safety preparedness guide, you can contact the agency by phone at 618-439-4EMA or visit us online at www.franklincountyema.com.

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