



THUNDERSTORMS AND LIGHTENING

Most thunderstorms pass without any serious consequences; if you are expecting a particularly heavy or prolonged storm you may want to take a few precautions.

The Met Office gives the following advice for thunderstorms and lightning:

Before the storm

- Pay attention to severe weather warnings issued by the Met Office
- Unplug unnecessary electrical devices, including the TV; power surges could break them
- If you are outside, seek shelter where possible. If you can hear thunder you are within range of the next lightning strike

During the storm

- Avoid using a landline phone – telephone lines can conduct electricity
- Avoid taps, including showers – water and metal pipes can conduct electricity
- If you are outside, avoid water and find a low-lying open place that is a safe distance from trees, poles and metal objects
- Avoid activities such as golf, rod fishing, or boating on a lake
- Be aware of metal objects that can conduct or attract lightning
- If you find yourself in an exposed location it may be advisable to:
 - squat down
 - place your hands on your knees
 - tuck your head between them
 - try to touch as little of the ground with your body as possible
 - do not lie down on the ground in an exposed location
- If you feel your hair stand on end, drop to the above squat position immediately



After the thunderstorm

- Do not touch electrical/telephone cables that are hanging loose
- If someone is struck by lightning, they often suffer severe burns. The strike also affects the heart, so check if they have a pulse

Driving in a thunderstorm

If you are caught out in thunder and lightning it is advised that you wind up the windows and stay inside your car; the metal frame will act as a cage and pass the current around the passengers and on to the ground.

This document has been produced with help from:
Shropshire Council Emergency Planning Unit
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