

# SAFETY CIRCULAR



Government  
of South Australia



RESCUE

## Lightning Strike Safety

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If thunder happens within 30 seconds of lightning, then the storm is within 10 kilometres of your location. Lightning safety experts consider this the strike danger zone and advise people to follow the 30/30 rule.

### The 30/30 Rule

Follow the precautions outlined below when thunder is heard within 30 seconds of a lightning flash and wait for 30 minutes after the last thunder is heard to resume your activity. If you're unable to take shelter inside, find the safest accessible location and stay there until the storm has passed.

### General precautions:

- Stay away from metal poles, fences, clothes lines etc.
- Never ride horses, bicycles or drive in open vehicles.
- If driving, slow down or park away from trees, power lines or other objects that may be damaged by storm activity.
- Stay inside metal-bodied (hard top) vehicles or caravans but do not touch any metal sections.
- If undertaking water activities, leave the water immediately.
- If boating, go ashore to shelter as soon as possible (a bridge or high jetty may offer immediate protection).
- Discard all metal objects.

### If shelter is near-by:

- Seek shelter in a hard top vehicle or solid building. Avoid small structures or fabric tents.
- Keep clear of windows.

### If shelter is not available:

- Crouch (alone, feet together), preferably in a hollow. Make yourself a small target.
- Remove metal objects from head/body.
- Do not lie down (the more of you that is in contact with the ground, the more 'attractive' you are to lightning) but avoid being highest object.
- If your hair stands on end or you hear buzzing on nearby rocks, fences etc., move immediately. At night, a blue glow may show if an object is about to be struck.
- Stay away from high and low points (hilltops, ridges & gullies), rock overhangs and shallow caves.
- Keep out of, and well away from, water bodies or watercourses.
- Be aware of the Lightning Safe Position. This involves:
  - Squatting or crouching with knees drawn up and feet together, preferably on dry insulating material (e.g. foam mat).
  - Keeping hands off the ground.
  - Spread group members out – about ten metres apart, but within calling distance.
  - Never shelter under tree/s.

### First aid

- Apply immediate CPR to lightning victims until medical help arrives. (You won't receive a shock from the victim).

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